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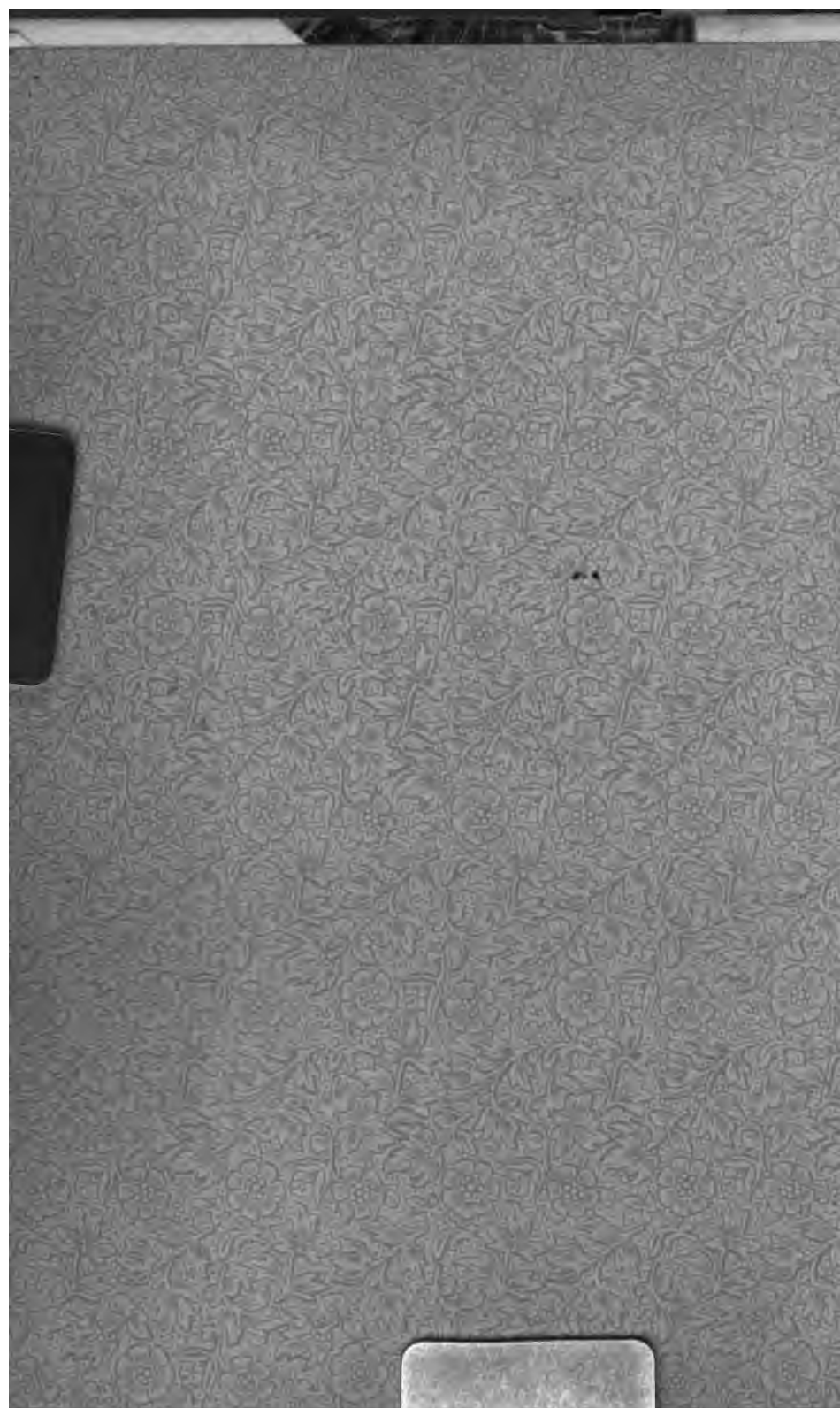
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**A STUDY
OF THE CONDITION
OF THE SCHOOLS
OF MAINE.**

**BY THE LOCAL
SUPERINTENDENTS,
WITH COMMENTS
BY THE STATE
SUPERINTENDENT
OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS
1899.**

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SPECIAL STATISTICS FURNISHED BY TOWN SUPERINTENDENTS WITH COMMENTS ON THE SAME.

The increasing demand for Reports of towns and cities, and of the departments of the State and Nation, shows an increasing interest in these documents. Until recently these volumes were used for scrap-books or waste paper. At the present time a large number of persons are reading the studies with an interest and carefulness which mark a new era in this field of labor. The progressive teacher of to-day realizes that these volumes contain material with which he ought to be familiar. Many magazines of commanding influence are discussing the school question, and are submitting the statistics gathered by them to men of eminent standing in the profession for analysis and comment. The newspapers of the country open their columns to private citizens, as well as officials, for discussion of all questions connected with the schools. These papers have voluntarily entered the field, and with the assistance of experts, have collected facts, and made suggestions which have resulted in material changes in the administration of the schools. All these efforts mean a revival of interest in the school of to-day.

This department, in the report of '95, gave an extended account of a personal inspection of a large number of rural schools, located in eight of the sixteen counties of the State. This study was made and published for the purpose of placing clearly before the people of the State such facts in relation to the schools as would enable them to form an intelligent idea of their physical, mental, and moral condition. It was not a pleasant task to prepare these records. The reading of them could not have been gratifying to those who have been accustomed to hear our school system and schools spoken of as models in form and administration. The typical school report refers to these subjects in terms which indicate that the schools are steadily improving, and that the people are to be congratulated upon the marked progress which has been made. The stereotyped statements are: "The parents are interested in the school, the children are regular in their attendance, attentive to their studies, and making rapid progress in their work; the teachers are alive to their duties, progressive in their spirit, and skillful in giving instruction." When the reader reaches this section of the documents, he can recite the sentences without the text. These panegyrics do not state the facts in regard to the schools. They have certainly ceased to attract the

attention of persons who read these reports, except to call forth a sarcastic comment upon the repetition of platitudes.

It is no longer true that the majority of the parents are interested in the public schools, and eager and ambitious for their advancement. Statistics show clearly that children are not regular in their voluntary attendance, and are not absorbed in their student work. And the testimony of all persons who are familiar with the facts is practically unanimous upon the point that we have many teachers who are conspicuously unfit, intellectually, scholastically and professionally for the service they attempt to perform. Since all these things are true, and are known to be true by those who have given this matter careful attention, it is for the interest of everybody that the truth be told.

The schools of Maine are of such quality that the people can afford to know all the facts concerning them. The old red schoolhouse of the Pine Tree State has furnished opportunities for the training of so large a number of men and women who have occupied distinguished positions in this and other states as to amply vindicate its influence, power and usefulness. The number of persons who are natives of this State and who have served with distinction as cabinet officers, members of congress, governors of other states, etc., is so large that no one should be sensitive about any criticisms which may be made upon our public schools. When we add to this notable list the multitude who have gone forth from their Maine homes to make for themselves honorable places in the professional, industrial, scientific and literary world, we are certainly justified in feeling proud of the institution which has prepared these people for their work and contributed so largely to their success. It is known to but few how large a concourse of persons have gone from this State and stand to-day in the front ranks of the progressive men and women of the different communities in which they have found their fields of labor. The large majority of these people received the best, and in many instances the most of their training in the common schools. The old academy, seminary and the colleges of Maine have done a work unparalleled in fitting those who came under their instruction for positions of distinguished usefulness. They have done this work so well that it is natural for many to regret that, with only a few conspicuous exceptions, the academy and seminary have passed out of existence; but they rejoice that the colleges remain, developed by years and strengthened by larger endowments and better equipments.

People who are conscious of their weakness are peculiarly sensitive to an exposure of their frailties. People who are conscious of their strength welcome any revelation which helps them to a better knowledge of themselves and better means of development. Believing that the people of Maine are capable of establishing, maintaining and intelligently using the best schools of the age, an effort has been made to place before them, verbally and graphically the condition of the schools of the State. These studies have not been undertaken for the purpose of proving any theories, gratifying any personal ambitions, or placing the State before the country in an unenviable light. The department has been much

encouraged in its work by the large number of letters received approving its course and corroborating the statements made concerning the schools.

For the purpose of placing the truth of the statements made beyond all doubt the department decided to submit a list of questions to the superintendents of the several towns and to ask them to furnish answers to the same. These questions cover the occupations of the superintendents, their scholastic attainments, their professional training and experience, the methods used by them in the performance of their official duties, the size and condition of their school yards, outhouses and school buildings, the appliances furnished for school work, and their opinions of the intellectual quality, scholastic and professional training, of their teachers. They were also asked to give their decisions upon what persons, organizations and influences are helpful or harmful to the schools. In addition to all these items they were requested to express themselves upon what changes are needed in the school law, if they are in favor of having teachers examined by State officials, and if they have any schools which come within the list described as "poor" or "very poor" in the last report of this department.

Below will be found the circular which was sent to the local superintendents of schools.

STATE OF MAINE.

EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT.

AUGUSTA, August 31, 1896.

To the Superintendent of Schools:

Will you please fill the blanks found below, and return this document to the State Superintendent on or before September 19, 1896. The information which you furnish is for the use of this department, and I hope your answers will be entirely frank as your name will not be made public. May I urge you to give this matter your immediate attention.

Town, County

Name, Age,

Post-office address,

My regular business (or profession) is.....

Have attended common schools,.....terms.

Have attended high school,.....terms.

Have attended academy or seminary,.....terms.

Have attended normal school,.....terms.

Have attended college or university,.....years.

Was graduated from.....in 18....

Have taught in common schools,.....terms.

Have taught in high school,.....terms.

Have taught in academies or seminaries,.....terms.

Have taught in normal schools,.....terms.

Taught my last term of school in 18....

I have been supervisor or superintendent of schools for....years.

I have been supervisor or superintendent of schools in this town for
.....years.

I have been supervisor or superintendent of schools continuously foryears.

Have found the following books on teaching helpful in my work as superintendent.

Have found the following educational papers helpful in my work as superintendent.

The number of teachers in this town who have been examined at a public examination conducted by the superintendent, in all the studies required by the statutes, and have received an average rank of not less than seventy-five per cent. on their papers is.....

I made.....visits to the schools of my town during the spring term of 1896.

In what ways did you try to assist the teachers in their work?.....

In what ways did you try to aid the children in their studies?.....

Are you using a Course of Study in your schools?.....

How many of your teachers are using the Course of Study prepared for the public schools of Maine and published in the State Superintendent's Report for 1895?.....

How many school yards have you in your town less than 75 feet square?.....

How many school yards have you that are between 75 and 150 feet square?.....

How many school yards have you that are more than 150 feet square?

How many of your outhouses are in poor condition?....; fair?....; excellent?.....

How many of your schoolhouses are in poor condition?....; fair....; excellent?.....

How many of your schoolhouses have plank desks?.....; modern desks?.....

How many of your schools are supplied with maps?.....

How many of your schools are supplied with charts?.....

How many of your schools have libraries?.....

How many of your schools have some apparatus?.....

Have you purchased, or do you intend to purchase during the year, new desks?....; maps?....; charts?....; library books?....; apparatus?....; school books?.....

How many outhouses have you built or do you intend to build during the year?.....

How many schoolhouses have you built or do you intend to build during the year?.....

How many school yards have you improved or do you intend to improve during the year?.....

How many school yard fences have you built or do you intend to build during the year?.....

Whole number of teachers employed in this town for present term is..

The number whose legal residence is in this town is.....

The number who are relatives of any member of the school committee is.....

The number who are connected with any member of the school committee by marriage, in business affairs, etc., is.....

The number who have attended a summer school is.....

The number who have attended any teachers' meetings within a year is.....

The number who have graduated from high schools is.....

The number who have graduated from academies or seminaries is....

The number who have graduated from normal schools is.....

The number who have graduated from colleges or universities is.....

The number of teachers who have taught in the school in which they are now teaching only one term is.....; two terms.....; three terms.....; one year.....; two years.....; three years.....; four years.....; five years.....; six years.....; seven years.....; eight years.....; nine years.....; ten years.....

Number who have taught in the same school more than ten years and less than sixteen is.....; more than fifteen and less than twenty-one.....; more than twenty and less than thirty-one.....; more than thirty and less than forty-one.....; more than forty and less than fifty-one.....; more than fifty years.....

Number who have taught only one term is.....; two terms.....; three terms.....; one year.....; two years.....; three years.....; four years.....; five years.....; six years.....; seven years.....; eight years.....; nine years.....; ten years.....

Number who have taught more than ten years and less than sixteen is.....; more than fifteen and less than twenty-one.....; more than twenty and less than thirty-one.....; more than thirty and less than forty-one.....; more than forty and less than fifty-one.....; more than fifty.....

Number who have taught continuously for only two terms is.....; three terms.....; one year.....; two years.....; three years.....; four years.....; five years.....; six years.....; seven years.....; eight years.....; nine years.....; ten years.....

Number who have taught continuously more than ten years and less than sixteen is.....; more than fifteen and less than twenty-one.....; more than twenty and less than thirty-one.....; more than thirty and less than forty-one.....; more than forty and less than fifty-one.....; more than fifty.....

How many of the teachers who taught in your schools during the spring term were not reappointed for the fall term to the same school because they were unsuccessful?.....

How many declined to be reappointed for the fall term to the school they taught during the spring term?.....

How many of your teachers have read books on teaching? — —

How many of your teachers are reading books on teaching? — —

How many of your teachers are reading educational papers? — —

What are your teachers' strongest points?.....

.....

What are your teachers' weakest points?.....

.....

What are the strongest points in their teaching?.....

.....

What are the weakest points in their teaching?.....

.....

What are the most encouraging things in your schools?.....

.....

What are the most discouraging things about your schools?.....

.....

.....

.....

What changes in the pupils would make it possible for them to derive

greater benefits from the school?.....

.....

.....

In what ways do the parents hinder the work of the school?.....

.....

.....

.....

In what ways might they assist in making it more serviceable to their

children?

.....

.....

In what ways do the churches interest themselves in the schools?....

.....

.....

.....

Does their influence tend to help the superintendent in securing the

best teachers and inducing the pupils to do the best work?.....

.....

.....

Have the politicians of your town exerted a helpful or harmful influ-

ence in the selection of teachers or management of your schools?.....

.....

.....

Have any other persons or organizations exerted a helpful or harmful

influence in the same particulars?.....

.....

.....

What changes in the school laws of this State would tend to increase

the usefulness of the schools?.....

.....

.....

Are you in favor of a law providing for the examination of teachers by the State on the basis outlined on pages 58 and 59 of the last report of this department?.....

Have you any schools in your town that are fairly described on pages 22-49 of the last report of this department?.....
(Those listed as "poor" or "very poor.")

W. W. STETSON,

State Superintendent of Common Schools.

It may be helpful to those who are not familiar with the school statistics of Maine to know that there are in the State 513 superintendents of schools, about 4,600 teachers, during any given term of school, and that the average length of the school year is 26 weeks, 3 days.

It is a matter of some interest to note that the superintendents of Maine are of an age to place them above the criticism of immaturity. Their average age is 39 years, 9 months. The youngest superintendent reporting is 22 years old, and the oldest is 80. There are 11 who are more than 59 years and less than 66 years of age. There are 6 who are more than 65 and less than 71. These figures indicate that the young man of the period is not considered eligible for this position in a majority of the towns of the State.

The farmers of Maine are much in evidence as superintendents of schools. The records show that 35 per cent. of these officials are engaged in this occupation; that 21 per cent. are teachers; 7 per cent. physicians; 5 per cent. housekeepers; 5 per cent. merchants; 4 per cent. lawyers; and 4 per cent. clergymen. There are five carpenters, 4 lumbermen, 4 laborers, 4 druggists, 3 journalists, 3 fishermen, 3 postmasters, 3 civil engineers, 2 painters, 2 stone cutters, 2 blacksmiths, 1 express agent, 1 bookkeeper, 1 guide, 1 saw filer, 1 surveyor, 1 ferryman, 1 barber, 1 printer, 1 manufacturer, 1 haberdasher, 1 railroad postal clerk, 1 dairyman and 1 "spinster," who are acting as superintendents of schools. Only about 4 per cent. of the superintendents devote all their time to superintendence. The remaining 96 per cent. give to this work such fractions of their time as they are willing to spare from their regular professions or occupations. The above figures indicate that the people of the State are not disposed to select their superintendents from any one class or profession, and that those selected are not expected to have special training for their official duties.

It is a matter of some curiosity to the examiner of these returns to notice the judgments expressed by different superintendents upon the several questions asked. It is felt, however, that this variety of expression is peculiarly helpful in getting the point of view of a large number of different men and women in relation to matters of peculiar importance. It is fortunate that in this study the candid judgment of so large a number of different persons, occupying so great a variety of positions, can be used in arriving at conclusions.

The returns show that 16 per cent. of the superintendents have received all their education in the common schools, and that 4 per cent. have not attended any school, either public or private. It is encouraging to know that 58 per cent. have attended high schools for a longer or shorter period; that 50 per cent. have attended academies or seminaries; 13 per cent. normal schools, and 20 per cent. colleges. It is of still greater importance that only 4 per cent. are graduates of high schools; 10 per cent. of academies or seminaries; 5 per cent. of normal schools, and 14 per cent. of colleges. Those who have been graduated from medical colleges or from the law departments of colleges have credited themselves with being college graduates, and these facts may help to explain the large per cent. under this last item.

The record shows that 65 per cent. of the superintendents have taught in the common schools; 29 per cent. in high schools; 8 per cent. in academies or seminaries, 1 per cent. in normal schools; and 20 per cent. are teaching at the present time. It should be borne in mind that all the superintendents who have taught in the higher schools are included in the 65 per cent. who have taught in the common schools. The recognition of this fact forces upon us the conclusion that 35 per cent. of the superintendents have never had any experience in the schoolroom as teachers.

It helps one to a more satisfactory analysis of the returns to know that 5 per cent. of the superintendents taught their last term within the past year; 3 per cent. within two years; 2 per cent. within three years; 3 per cent. within four years; 2 per cent. within five years; 2 per cent. within six years; 2 per cent. within seven years; 2 per cent. within eight years; 2 per cent. within nine years and 1 per cent. within ten years.

Seven per cent. have not taught for more than 10 and less than 15 years; 6 per cent. have not taught for more than 15 and less than 20 years; 2 per cent. have not taught for more than 20 and less than 25 years; 2 per cent. have not taught for more than 25 and less than 30 years; 3 per cent. have not taught for more than 30 and less than 40 years; and 1 per cent. have not taught for more than 40 years.

The average time which these officials have served as superintendents of schools is 3 years and 3 months and the average time for which they have served continuously is 2 years and 6 months.

Sixty-eight per cent. of the superintendents report that they have not read any books on the science or art of education; 14 per cent. have read one book; 10 per cent. have read more than one book, but not a large number; and 8 per cent. have read a large number of books upon these subjects. Sixty per cent. state that they have not read educational papers or magazines; 20 per cent. are reading one educational paper; 14 per cent. are reading more than one paper; and 6 per cent. are reading several papers.

The superintendents report that they have examined 68 per cent. of their teachers at public examinations in all the studies required by the statutes, and that these teachers have attained an average rank of not less than 75 per cent. in their examinations.

Forty-five per cent. of the superintendents are using a course of study, and 19 per cent. of the teachers are using the course of study prepared for the public schools of Maine by the State Superintendent. This is quite a remarkable showing when it is remembered that the course was not issued by the department until March, 1895.

An examination of the conditions which obtain as to school property of the towns shows that 9 per cent. of the school yards have no limits that could be discovered by the superintendent; that 30 per cent. were less than 75 feet square; that 39 per cent. were between 75 and 150 feet square; and that 22 per cent. were more than 150 feet square.

Twenty-four per cent. of the outhouses are reported as being in poor condition; 49 per cent. in fair condition; and 27 per cent. in excellent condition. A personal examination of some of the buildings reported as in "excellent condition" has revealed the fact that some superintendents consider an out-building "excellent" which has a door that can be closed, and windows in which there are no broken panes, but which is not supplied with vaults. Many buildings that have no interior finish except the rough frame are listed as belonging in this class. This explanation may serve to give a better idea of what is considered essential in an outhouse, and will also convince any one of the necessity of very radical changes of sentiment upon this matter. The fact that superintendents were willing to report that about one-fourth of all the outhouses in the State are in such condition as to be listed as "poor" is sufficient to bear out the very severe statements that were made upon this subject in the reports of the department.

Twenty-two per cent. of the schoolhouses were returned as in poor condition; 52 per cent. in a fair condition; and 20 per cent. in excellent condition. The explanations which have been given above in regard to outhouses to some extent, apply to schoolhouses as well, although not with the same emphasis as to the former buildings. It is learned from the returns that 59 per cent. of the schoolhouses are provided with plank desks, and 41 per cent. with modern desks. By the term "modern desk" is meant the desk which is furnished by some reputable school furniture company, and is usually constructed of iron supports with board tops and receptacles for books; the chair being made of wood and the stand-ard of iron.

It is of some interest to learn that 60 per cent. of the schools are supplied with maps; 59 per cent. have charts; and 24 per cent. have some miscellaneous apparatus; and 6 per cent. have supplied themselves, or have been supplied by the towns, with libraries. It should be a matter of considerable concern to people who look to the public schools to furnish the children with such training as will help them to be the best citizens, that so large a number of the schools are not provided with the necessary appliances to enable them to conduct their work in the most efficient way. Unless a school is supplied with maps, charts, apparatus, or books for supplementary work it cannot do the best service for the children in giving them such instruction and inspiration as will help them to grow into worthy and helpful members of society. It is encouraging to learn, however, that 4 per cent. of the superintendents are

to purchase modern desks during the present year; that 3 per cent. are arranging to purchase maps; and that 11 per cent. are to purchase more school books. One is not favorably impressed with the information that only 7 per cent. of the towns have arranged to build or repair outhouses, and that only 4 per cent. are to repair or build schoolhouses; but evidence that improvements are to be made is indicated by the fact that 12 per cent. of the superintendents are to improve the school yards, and that 5 per cent. are planning to build new fences during the present year.

It is interesting to note that 71 per cent. of all the teachers employed in the schools of Maine are legal residents of the towns in which they are teaching, that 12 per cent. are relatives of the superintending school committee, and that an additional 5 per cent. are related by marriage or associated in business with these officials in such a way as to give these teachers an unsafe influence in securing their appointments. Thus it will be seen that 17 per cent., or a little more than one-sixth of all the teachers of the State are connected with the members of the superintending school committees in such a way as to give them an undue advantage over other applicants in securing positions in the schools. Seventeen per cent. of the population of Maine is 112,384 persons. There are something over 2,000 members of the superintending school committees of the State. It must be quite clear to any one who examines these figures that the superintending school committees are placing in the schools a much larger per cent. of those who are related to or associated with them, than their fractional part of the population of the State justifies. If we allow 2,000 members for the superintending school committees, and allow each member three relatives who are eligible for positions as teachers, and estimate the voting population of the State to be 108,000, then the superintending school committees may place in the schools 95 teachers who have some consanguineal or financial claims upon them. But as a matter of fact, they have about eight and one-third times this number.

It is possible that these facts help to account for the schools which were listed in the last report as "poor" or "very poor," and for the additional fact that 38 per cent. of the teachers of the State have not been required to submit to the examinations required by the statutes.

It is a matter for congratulation that 27 per cent. of the teachers have attended Summer Schools. But a school official could not be enthusiastic over the fact that only 56 per cent. of the teachers have attended any teachers' meeting within a year, and that hence 44 per cent. of the teachers are not enough interested in their profession, their work, their personal or professional improvement to attend these gatherings.

It is reported that 34 per cent. of the teachers are graduates of high schools; 18 per cent. are graduates of academies or seminaries; 13 per cent. are graduates of normal schools; and 4 per cent. are graduates of colleges or universities. In studying these figures it is necessary for one to remember that many of the graduates of normal schools are also graduates of high schools or academies, and that all the graduates

of the colleges are also graduates of high schools, academies or seminaries.

No one can help being alarmed by the fact that 28 per cent. of the teachers of the State have taught only one term in the school in which they are now teaching; that 20 per cent. have taught only two terms; 11 per cent. three terms; 8 per cent. one year; thus making 67 per cent. of the teachers of the State who have taught only one year or less in the school in which they are teaching at the present time. A tenure of office so short as the above figures indicate must mean one of two things; either the teachers are so inefficient, or school officials are so captious in their employment of teachers that more than two-thirds of the teachers are forced to become pedagogical tramps. No one would be willing to use so harsh a sentence in regard to so worthy a body of people. But the figures furnished by the officials who have direct knowledge of existing conditions, and who must, at least, bear one-half of the responsibility of these frequent changes, make no other statement sufficiently plain to represent the condition of affairs.

It is more interesting than encouraging to learn that 6 per cent. of the teachers have taught only two years in the same school; 4 per cent. three years; 2 per cent. four years; 1 1-2 per cent. five years; and 1 1-3 per cent. six years; 11 have taught seven years in the same school; 10 have taught eight years; 8 have taught nine years; and 21 have taught ten years in the same school. Thirty-five have taught more than ten years and less than sixteen years; 9 have taught more than fifteen and less than twenty-one years; 8 have taught more than twenty and less than thirty-one years in the same school. If these last numbers could be multiplied by fifty, we should have a condition of affairs of which we should be proud, and of which our school would show the beneficial results.

There are some other statistics along this line which are not particularly gratifying. The reports show that 9 per cent. of the teachers have taught only one term; 7 per cent. have taught only two terms; 6 per cent. only three terms; and 6 per cent. only one year; thus making 27 per cent. who have taught one year or less. The record does not improve as we go on, because it is shown that 8 per cent. have taught only two years; 8 per cent. three years; 6 per cent. four years; 7 per cent. five years; 4 per cent. six years; 2 1-2 per cent. seven years; 3-4 per cent. eight years; 2 per cent. nine years; and 2 1-4 per cent. ten years. It further appears that 5 per cent. have taught more than ten years and less than sixteen years; 2 1-4 per cent. have taught more than fifteen and less than twenty-one years; 1 1-2 per cent. have taught more than twenty and less than thirty-one years; while 10 have taught more than thirty and less than forty-one years; and one has taught more than fifty years.

The next items fail to give the comfort for which lovers of the public schools must be looking. The superintendents report that 22 per cent. of the teachers have taught only two terms continuously; 12 per cent. three terms; 11 per cent. one year, or that 45 per cent. of all the teachers of the State have taught continuously for one year or less. The

record continues to be disappointing when it reveals that 13 per cent. have taught continuously for two years; 9 per cent. for three years; 6 per cent. for four years; 5 per cent. for five years; 4 per cent. for six years; 2 1-2 per cent. for seven years; 2 3-4 per cent. for eight years; 1 per cent. for nine years; 1 3-4 per cent. for ten years. It appears that 3 per cent. have taught more than ten and less than sixteen years; 1 per cent. have taught more than fifteen and less than twenty-one years; while only 13 have taught more than twenty and less than thirty-one years; 2 have taught more than thirty and less than fifty-one years; and one has taught fifty years continuously.

The account is not improving when superintendents have to report that 7 per cent. of the teachers were refused reappointment because they had proved themselves unfit for the positions which they held during the spring term; but we learn that 9 per cent. declined reappointment from various causes, some to join the married majority and others to continue their studies in higher schools.

It is not creditable to the teachers of the State that the superintendents are obliged to make record of the fact that only 62 per cent. of the instructors of the youth have ever read any books on the history, science or art of education, leaving 38 per cent. who have never read any book upon any of these subjects. A somewhat improved condition of affairs is shown by the statement that 47 per cent. of the teachers of the State are at the present time reading books upon some of these subjects, leaving 53 per cent. who are failing to respond to the calls of the age. It is not altogether flattering to the teachers, that only 22 per cent. are reading educational papers or magazines, and that 78 per cent. are making no use of these modern helps in giving instruction.

But this disappointing record is somewhat relieved by the peculiarly gratifying report of the superintendents that 75 per cent. of them are in favor of having teachers examined by a State Board of Examiners as outlined on pages 58 and 59 of the report of 1895 of this department, and that only 14 per cent. are opposed to such an examination, while 3 per cent. are undecided, and 8 per cent. failed to give any reply to the question.

The department regrets that it is necessary to make record of the fact that 40 2-3 per cent. of the superintendents report that they have schools which are fairly described by the account which is given of the "poor" or "very poor" schools on pages 22-49 of the report of 1895. In making a personal inspection of the rural schools, the State Superintendent purposely selected sparsely settled towns, and schools that might properly be classed as "back districts," and it was, therefore, felt that the statements made were more severe than the general condition of the schools would justify. But it is a curious coincidence that several hundred reports, made by as many different persons, give a per cent. which is substantially the same as the one given in the report referred to above. But the record is somewhat modified by the fact that 13 per cent. of the superintendents are in doubt whether they have schools which would properly be listed in either of these divisions, so that the estimate made

by the local superintendents who have the largest possible opportunities of knowing their schools is a number of per cent. higher than that given by the department. It is therefore apparent that the statements made in the report of 1895, are more than justified by the facts. Twenty-one per cent. of the superintendents reported that they had no schools which were fairly described by the pages referred to above, and 25 per cent. failed to give any replies to the question.

These items make it quite clear that the department has been conservative rather than radical in its estimate of school conditions.

Below are given the titles of papers, magazines and books which have been read by some of the superintendents of the State. The list is a peculiarly interesting one as it shows that some of the superintendents are making great efforts to prepare themselves for their work.

PAPERS AND MAGAZINES.

Maine Teacher; School Bulletin; Practical Educator; Public School Journal; New York State Educational Journal; Teacher's Out-Look; School Review; Education; Educational Review; Normal Instructor; Teacher's Guide; American Teacher; School Board Journal; Teacher's World; Popular Educator; Primary Education; Northwestern Journal of Education; School Journal; Teacher's Institute; Primary Teacher; New England Journal of Education; New Education; Normal Worker.

BOOKS.

Psychology in Education, Roark; Psychology Applied to the Art of Teaching, Baldwin; Apperception, Lange; Essentials of Methods, De Garmo; Theory and Practice, Brown; Methods in Geography, King; Theory and Practice of Teaching, Page; School Supervision, Pickard; Lectures on Teaching, Compayre; Evolution of Dodd, Smith; Education as a Science, Barns; School Economy, Wickersham; Methods of Instruction, Brooks; Elements of Pedagogy, White; Helps in Teaching Reading, Hussey; Literary Land Marks, Burt; Psychology of Numbers, McLellan & Dewey; Horace Mann's Works; Educational Reformers, Quick; Normal Methods, Brooks; Chips from a Teacher's Workshop, Klemm; Methods of Teaching, Swett; Contribution to the Science of Education, Payne; School Management, White; Practical Hints to Teachers, Howland; School Interests and Duties, King; Public School System, Rice; Education, Spencer; School Management and Theory and Practice, Ranh; Courses and Methods, Prince; Manual of Object Teaching, Calkins; Lectures on Teaching, Fitch; Talks on Teaching, Parker; Mistakes in Teaching, Hughes; Hand-Book of Psychology, Sully; Principles and Practice of Teaching, Johonnot; Teaching the Language-Arts, Hinsdale; Way-Marks for Teachers, Arnold; Manual of Geography, Frye; Normal Methods, Holbrook; History of Pedagogy, Compayre; The Philosophy of Education, Rosenkrans; Mental Science and Culture, Brooks; History of Education,

Painter; Science of Mind Applied to Teaching, Hoffman; Walks and Talks, Smith; Essays of, Frederick Harrison; How to Teach, Calkins, Harrison and Kiddle; Grube Methods, Seeley; Education of Man, Froebel; Pedagogics of the Kindergarten, Froebel; Life and Works of Pestalozzi, Krusi; Psychology, James; Essays of, Burroughs; Essays of, Emerson; Methods of Teaching History, Hall; School Supervision, Payne.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

In condensing the replies of the superintendents to the following questions it has been necessary to compress more than 650 pages of manuscript into comparatively narrow limits. In performing this task a special effort has been made to retain the language used by the superintendents, as far as possible, and at the same time include the ideas and suggestions which were so frequently repeated as to be entitled to special prominence. Where the exact words of the superintendent are used they are inclosed in quotation marks, and are not necessarily expressed by any one except the person quoted.

THE FOLLOWING REPLIES WERE GIVEN TO THE QUESTION, "IN WHAT WAYS DID YOU TRY TO ASSIST THE TEACHERS IN THEIR WORK?"

By classifying the pupils, urging teachers to omit unprofitable work, hearing recitations, and making the teachers feel that they have the support of the superintendent.

By making suggestions as to methods to be used in teaching special studies, assuming the responsibility of disposing of special cases of discipline, urging the teachers to make a special study of the needs of the individual pupils, and defending them when criticised by captious or unprincipled parents.

By informing them in what particulars they fail, and commending their efforts to improve.

By assisting them in planning the work to be done, and giving them suggestions as to what course to pursue under given circumstances.

By insisting that good order should be maintained, and that the best methods should be used.

By holding teachers' meetings, and having discussions of school management, methods to be used in teaching given subjects, and how to improve schools along the lines in which they are unsatisfactory.

By insisting that the pupils shall attend regularly, and if possible, have them do so because of a kindly feeling toward the school and the teacher.

By requiring the teachers to be punctual in opening and closing school and urging them to be courteous in their intercourse with the children.

By using the questions furnished by the State Superintendent, and indicating specifically, through their aid, in what particulars they are successful and in what particulars they fail.

By consulting them in regard to their school needs, and giving advice, and trying to stimulate the parents to give them a more cordial support.

By suggesting what books, papers and articles they should read, and inquiring of them as to the help which they derived from reading the same.

By furnishing them with books for supplementary work in the various branches, and assisting them to provide themselves with teachers' papers and magazines.

By showing a personal interest in the school, its work, the methods used, and the progress made.

By insisting that the teachers be alert, and up with the times professionally and scholastically.

By providing complete selections from the standard authors for the reading classes, instead of the more advanced reading books.

By having the pupils understand that they are to obey promptly all rules prescribed by the committee, or laid down by the teacher.

By being straightforward, candid and honest in all my dealings with, and criticisms and commendations of the teachers.

By insisting that the teachers shall use the Course of Study prepared for the public schools of Maine.

By insisting that the teachers shall grade their schools as rapidly as they can do so, without interfering with the advancement of the individual child.

By insisting that when a teacher leaves a school she shall leave a detailed statement of the studies pursued, the names of the members of each class, and the point to which each class has advanced, with such comments as will enable the teacher who succeeds her to take up the work without loss of time.

By helping them to prepare exercises and topics for regular recitations, and for special work.

By visiting the parents, and urging them to visit the school, and indicate to the teacher that she has their sympathy and support.

By emphasizing the importance of language work in all studies.

By preparing lists of questions on current events, civil government, physiology, hygiene, nature studies, etc.

By revising programs, and fixing standards for promotion, advising in regard to length of lessons, and making suggestions as to what to do with pupils who are backward in their studies.

By urging the teachers to attend town, county and State associations, and informing them where they can get aids and helps for their regular work.

By insisting that they shall take the International Teachers' Reading Course.

By furnishing them with such apparatus as the means of the town will permit, and making suggestions as to how they and their pupils can construct additional apparatus.

By cordially and resolutely supporting them in cases of discipline.

By insisting that they shall pass an examination in pedagogy before they receive their certificates.

By insisting that the teachers shall feel a personal responsibility in the care of all school property, and report promptly to the superintendent any vandalism on the part of any pupil or person.

By furnishing necessary reference books, and giving talks and explanations on how to use them.

By insisting upon frequent and thorough reviews.

By providing the best text-books the market affords, and in such quantities as will enable the school to do its work in the best way.

By being loyal to the teachers and speaking kindly of them whenever I meet pupils or patrons of the school.

By indicating to them that I do not expect them to reform their schools during the first week of the term, but that if they have accomplished something, they should have the courage and patience to continue in the good work.

By developing an interest in supplementary reading, by questioning the pupils as to what they have read, and what they think of it when I visit the school.

By trying to impress upon the pupils the idea that they must work out their lessons, and not depend upon their parents, their older brothers or sisters, or the teacher; and that perfect lessons are entitled to very high commendation.

By urging teachers to keep their schoolrooms tidy, and decorate them with inexpensive pictures and other material which they or their children can provide.

By making the teacher feel that she should be an example of all that she desires the pupils to become.

"By showing that I have an interest in the pupils as individuals, and by recognizing promptly whatever of progress they have made."

By endeavoring to create an enthusiasm for the school.

By showing pupils in every possible way the advantage an education will be to them.

"By joggling the teacher who is jogging along contentedly in well worn ruts."

"By discussing the State Course of Study with the teachers, and explaining why it should be used, and how to use it."

By asking teachers to read certain books, and then questioning them on what the books say in regard to certain subjects.

By making the parents, teachers and pupils feel that I have a personal interest in all the details of the school that are of value or importance to them.

By asking the pupils to send me samples of their best work, and filing the same for future reference or exhibition.

"By stimulating a wholesome rivalry between different schools."

By making many short visits, and having the teacher and pupils feel that I am liable to drop in at any time rather than to make a few long visits, which shall be understood as completing the inspection.

By being prompt, hearty and emphatic in all my commendations of the teacher and the pupils, and by making these commendations directly to them or in their presence.

"By refusing to criticise the teacher in the presence of the pupils or any person living in the community in which she teaches."

By urging the teachers to take up special subjects, try new methods and introduce special features, as quotations, recitations, author's days, current and important events, etc.

"I am afraid I have not been of much help to my teachers."

By urging parents to support the teacher in the requirements which she makes of their children in the studies they shall pursue, the amount of work they shall do and the way in which they shall conduct themselves in and out of school, and by showing the parents, so far as I can, the evils of criticising the teacher in the presence of their children.

By showing the teachers that they must have a genuine interest in and affection for their pupils, and that they must make a careful study of them as individuals, and adapt the work and methods to their capabilities.

By having the schoolrooms, furniture, appliances and apparatus put in first-class condition, and then insisting that the teacher and pupils shall protect them from unnecessary wear and tear.

"By insisting that the pupils shall advance only as fast as they can do the work thoroughly, and by showing the teachers and pupils that I place a much higher estimate on thoroughness and skill than I do upon the number of pages which they have 'gone over.'"

By insisting that pupils shall study the subjects which their previous training and present capabilities fit them to study with profit.

"By visiting the schools at least once a month, and staying all day in each room, and making a note of all mistakes, and calling the attention of the teacher to the same after the school has closed."

By insisting that the teachers shall drill the pupils on subjects in which they are specially deficient.

By giving the teacher a detailed account of the school she is to teach, and indicating to her the character and quality of the work she is expected to perform, and then see that she carries out the instructions.

By requiring pupils to pass a satisfactory examination before joining any given class, and by insisting upon a similar examination before they are promoted to the next higher class, and "by refusing to yield to childish caprice and senseless ambition in choice of studies."

By urging the teachers to give such instruction, directions and suggestions in manners as will help the children to abandon the coarseness of conduct and vulgarity of speech used by so many children of the present day.

By urging teachers to give moral instruction through example, precept, quotations, sketches of worthy men and women, etc.

By allowing teachers to visit other schools during each term, and having them report on what they saw that they approved and could use in their schools.

By forming teachers' reading circles, and discussing some standard work on education.

By asking them to read the report of the State Superintendent for 1895, and questioning them about the points in which their schools are like the schools therein described.

THE FOLLOWING REPLIES WERE GIVEN TO THE QUESTION, "IN WHAT WAYS DID YOU TRY TO AID THE CHILDREN IN THEIR STUDIES?"

By assisting the teacher in keeping them interested in their work, by taking a personal interest in each pupil, and encouraging the different pupils to do special work along the lines in which they show special aptitudes.

By asking questions about books or papers which they had read, and the studies which they were pursuing.

By urging them to do work along particular lines not covered by the text-books studied.

By judiciously praising the children for the efforts which they made to master their work.

"By offering a silk banner to the school that handed in the best written work in the regular studies, and was most thorough in their reviews for the entire term."

By insisting that the pupils shall take the studies prescribed by the superintending school committee, and that they shall pass satisfactory examinations before being promoted to a higher grade.

By urging them to be prompt and regular in their attendance.

By explaining and illustrating to them the value of an education.

By stimulating them by precept, anecdote, story and citation to make the best use of their time while in school.

By urging them to rely upon themselves, concentrate their attention upon their work and be unwilling to receive aid in doing anything which they can possibly do without assistance.

By making them feel that they are furnished the best opportunities the means of the town will allow.

By trying to awaken in them an ambition to excel, and a desire to go on to some higher school.

By interesting them in the books, appliances and material furnished for the school, and developing in them the feeling that they are responsible for its care.

By showing them the wisdom of studying more things than are found in the text-books, and the importance of mastering a few things rather than having a superficial knowledge of many subjects.

By testing them with oral and written questions.

"I fear I am not of any help to the children in our schools."

"By trying to arouse a friendly rivalry among the schools, and letting the pupils see that their attempts to succeed are noticed and appreciated."

By furnishing them with the best teachers that I can employ.

By showing them that I have a personal interest in their advancement.

"By making suggestions as to methods of studying and memorizing."

By encouraging them to have a definite aim and to be exact in all their work.

By stimulating them to observe the forms of nature about them, and to ask questions of their teachers, parents and friends about the things they see.

By meeting them socially so far as my opportunities will permit.

By interesting them in accomplishing a definite amount of work before a certain time.

By subjecting them to thorough and carefully considered tests in the several branches and along the different lines in which I have requested them to make investigations.

By having them feel that they are liable to be examined at any time upon any subject, and hence the importance of frequent and thorough reviews.

By preparing lists of questions for them to find answers to.

By showing them how their studies may be connected with and helpful in their outside work and interests.

By giving informal talks upon subjects in which I wish them to be interested.

By encouraging them to use their spare moments in making a careful study of some subject, calling their attention to the work which has been done by some men by using their odd minutes.

By insisting that all work in the lower grades shall be illustrated by charts, sand-boards or other material.

By asking them to discover the reason for certain things which are found in nature.

By impressing upon them the importance of mastering the work they are required to study in the lower grades.

By showing them that the teacher is their friend, interested in their progress, and ambitious to assist them in their studies.

By showing them the importance of acquiring habits of study, and thoughtfulness, and the necessity of caring for their bodies.

By showing them that they can only acquire an education by hard work.

By being careful to speak to them in a pleasant way when I meet them on the street.

"By making especially prominent the practical part of their studies, and showing them in what ways the information they gain may be financially helpful."

"By giving them accounts of places I have visited, and objects of interest I have seen."

By explaining to them the reasons why they should take the course of study as prescribed, and showing the importance of being familiar with all the subjects required.

By correcting errors in statements of facts, use of language, etc., as they are noticed.

By outlining a course of reading for each school, furnishing books for the same, and questioning the children as to what they read.

By outlining some special work outside of school books, suggesting ways and means of gaining information in regard to the same, and examining them on the work they were asked to do.

By using the same general plan for work on noted men, great events, etc.

"By helping them to read between the lines of what they were reading."

By showing them that they have an interest in supporting the teacher, and helping her in her work.

By explaining to them the advantages which follow regular attendance and faithful study.

"By seeing that the truant officer does his duty by the children."

By winning their confidence and good will, and then stimulating them to work.

By forming a personal acquaintance with the pupils, and frequently making inquiries of them as to what work they are doing, and how they are succeeding in it.

THE FOLLOWING REPLIES WERE GIVEN TO THE QUESTIONS, "WHAT ARE YOUR TEACHERS' STRONGEST POINTS, AND WHAT ARE THE STRONGEST POINTS IN THEIR TEACHING?"

A willingness to do hard work; the ability to develop self-control in the children, arouse an interest in their studies, and adapt themselves to the different children, different communities, and secure the co-operation of pupils and parents.

Great natural ability, unusual force of character, strong personality and a willingness to co-operate heartily and honestly with the superintendent.

Superior scholastic qualifications, earnestness in the work of the school, practical common sense; tact in dealing with unruly pupils, and clear, understandable explanations of difficult points.

Ability to maintain good order without friction; love of work; an affection for children.

The influence they exert because of Christian graces; enthusiasm in their work; good taste and sound judgment.

A determination to have their pupils thorough in their studies, and added to this unusual faithfulness, unselfishness, perseverance and clear, concise ways of imparting information.

Force of character, self-control, thorough knowledge of modern methods, and that quiet energy which arouses and stimulates the children under their care.

Rare executive ability, a warm sympathy with the troubles of the children, and a desire to have their schools among the best.

Conscientiousness in their work and anxiety to learn the best ways of doing it.

High moral character and ability to gain the love and respect of their pupils.

They feel that character is more important than knowledge, and that the ability to do is worth more than a knowledge of facts.

A disposition to work, and a desire to improve.

"Campaigning for schools."

"Love of money."

Tact and willingness to do what is asked of them, and courage to meet resolutely every difficulty which presents itself.

Peculiar aptness in teaching given subjects.

"The ability to make the most of the best in the children."

Loyalty to themselves, to the pupils, to the school and to school officials.

Thoroughness in knowledge of common school studies.

"Willingness to do everything they can to help the work along."

"Attractive personal appearance and courteousness."

"Ability to bring the smart scholars forward rapidly."

A desire to better qualify themselves for their work.

"Decision, perseverance, energy and love for the work."

Knowledge of how to keep their pupils interested, and ability to devise new methods of giving instruction.

"A willingness to do their best under the circumstances."

Ability to cultivate the powers of observation.

"Leading the children to discover facts for themselves, and giving such supplementary work as will help in broadening the path along which they walk."

THE FOLLOWING REPLIES WERE GIVEN TO THE QUESTIONS, "WHAT ARE YOUR TEACHERS' WEAKEST POINTS, AND WHAT ARE THE WEAKEST POINTS IN THEIR TEACHING?"

They do the work for the pupils.

They are lacking in scholarship in the common school branches.

They do not know how to direct the children in concentrating their attention upon their work and to secure that degree of thoroughness which is essential to good teaching.

They do not know how to grade their schools, reduce the number of classes, and dispatch the work of the school quietly and expeditiously.

They are so ignorant of literature, civil government, nature studies and current events as to render it impossible for them to give instruction of any value in these subjects.

They are lazy, narrow, selfish, and wanting in personality, force of character and influence for good over the children.

They depend too much on text-books, and show a lamentable lack of professional and scholastic training.

They are excitable, divide their attention among many subjects at the same time, are wanting in the ability to discipline the school without

friction, worry over trifles, and cannot apply themselves to any subject continuously.

They are devoid of ambition, natural aptitude in teaching, self-control and a willingness to learn from the experience of others.

They do not know how to question pupils, and get the best work out of them.

They are not punctual in attending school, and do not feel the importance of being truthful and honest.

They do not realize the importance of doing thorough work, because they have never done work of this kind themselves.

They are timid, feel that their work is limited to the six school hours, and have no interest in the people of the community.

They are not prepared for their recitations, and do not secure intelligent recitations from the children.

They do not read educational books or papers.

They are wanting in originality, and are careless and heedless in what they do.

They are not careful in their conversation, manners or dress in their associations with the children.

They cannot apply practically the principles taught.

"Want of broad culture, and lack of power in developing the reasoning faculties of children."

Try to cover too much ground, and are not concerned to have the work done thoroughly.

They are too much absorbed in matters which are not connected with the schools to do good work.

They have no ability to devise new ways of doing things.

They do not realize the importance of the positions which they hold.

"They cannot maintain respectable order, even with harsh punishments."

"They do not use good language."

"They are wanting in tact in managing disgruntled parents and offending pupils."

"They do not know how much of any subject to teach, and where to put the emphasis."

"Lack of knowledge of the child mind."

"Inability to comprehend the natural abilities of the different scholars."

"A lack of general information, together with too much parrot-like recitation and too little original thought."

Inability to deal properly with unruly pupils.

Inability to exert a controlling influence for good over their pupils.

They do not know how to give such drill exercises as will insure thoroughness.

"An over-weening estimate of their own capacity."

Lack of system and want of ability to make prominent the essential facts and place the minor details in their proper relation to the subject discussed.

Failure to insist upon accurate work, and inability to tell what little they do know.

Failure to have frequent thorough reviews.

"Do not know the whys of things."

Inability to govern their schools.

They waste their own and the pupils' time in trying to have them do work which they cannot master, and fail to insist upon such classification of their pupils as will make it possible for them to do satisfactory work.

They do not begin and close school on time; are not prompt, orderly and systematic in their work.

They have no definite object to accomplish, and do not seem to have any well considered methods of conducting the exercises or giving instruction.

THE FOLLOWING REPLIES WERE GIVEN TO THE QUESTION, "WHAT ARE THE MOST ENCOURAGING THINGS IN YOUR SCHOOLS?"

A disposition to study, and a respect for teachers, school officials and parents, and regular attendance.

The coöperation of parents with teachers, and an increase of attendance on the part of the children.

Superior ability in the pupils, and an interest in the school on the part of a majority of the parents.

"That pupils will attend when our schoolhouses are in such wretched condition."

"Frequent visits to the schools by the farmers in the community."

"An occasional pupil and teacher seem to realize what the school is for."

Improvement in the oral and written use of English.

A desire on the part of the pupils and teachers to do practical work outside of text-books.

Close attention to study, thorough work and good discipline.

Increased attendance in the primary classes; interest and intelligence on the part of teachers, and a desire to be familiar with the best methods.

"A willingness on the part of the people to raise money for school purposes."

"The pupils seem to be learning to think for themselves."

A desire on the part of many pupils to master their work and go on to higher institutions of learning.

A willingness to submit to the rules of the school committee and the directions of the teacher.

"There is no discord among teachers, parents and pupils."

Improvement in theory and practice, and a marked desire to excel.

Punctuality in attendance, ambition on the part of teachers and pupils to have their school rank among the best in town.

Improvement in the buildings, appliances and apparatus furnished for the schools.

Improvement in obedience, manners, language and habits.

"Have succeeded in abolishing tobacco."

"More pupils from the rural districts attend the high school."

"An awakening interest on the part of parents, and a 50 per cent. increase in attendance in the higher grades."

An increasing willingness to work in the studies which they are fitted to pursue.

Broad, keen, active, intelligent and ambitious children.

"The children are willing to do anything for their own advancement."

"A readiness on the part of teachers and pupils to receive and act upon suggestions."

Interest manifested by pupils who have but little or no encouragement at home.

"A general demand that teachers shall be better fitted by training and experience for their work."

A desire on the part of the pupils to complete the regular course and be graduated from the school.

"A realizing sense of the fact that we are not up to date."

An interest in the Course of Study, and a desire to have it adopted and followed.

The teachers are becoming convinced that they must be better scholars and more familiar with modern methods, and more skillful in their instruction.

A desire on the part of the children to conduct themselves in such a way as to secure the approbation of refined and cultured people.

"It is low tide now; hope to see some improvement in the future."

"Fights." (This answer was given by "a man of peace" and one who practices what he preaches.)

"Earnestness of teachers."

"The number of pupils from this town who are attending higher institutions of learning."

"The members of the superintending school committee are showing a *slight* interest in the schools."

"A steady growth in good spirit."

Increased interest in nature studies.

That our children are being instructed in two languages.

"Bright, eager faces that indicate good material."

"That teachers know the peculiar circumstances of each pupil, and help him in the ways in which he needs assistance."

"The introduction of modern methods, and a tendency to employ teachers who have had professional training."

Eagerness for knowledge, and a willingness to make great sacrifices to enjoy school privileges."

"An active educational spirit in our community."

"A general up-grade movement in our schools."

THE FOLLOWING REPLIES WERE GIVEN TO THE QUESTION, "WHAT ARE THE MOST DISCOURAGING THINGS ABOUT YOUR SCHOOLS?"

Lack of suitable school yards, respectable outhouses, comfortable schoolhouses and modern school furniture. A supreme indifference on the part of some of the parents to these several particulars.

Ignorant and malicious opposition of some of the parents.

The extent to which children are allowed to spend the time before and after school, and their evenings upon the streets.

Lack of money to provide necessary books, apparatus, appliances, etc.

Scarcity of pupils and unsatisfactory means of transporting what there are.

Lack of energy on the part of pupils, and a desire to leave school at an early age.

A failure on the part of the parents to inform themselves as to whether their children attend school or not.

A lack of interest on the part of the pupils, and an unwillingness to respond to the demands made upon them.

"Stupidity produced by generations of rum drinking, tobacco using and licentious practices."

A willingness on the part of parents and pupils to injure the teacher and school by harsh, unjust and untruthful criticisms.

The inclination of pupils to leave a study before they have mastered it.

Parents fail to encourage their children to continue in school.

Instances of gross disobedience, disrespect and vandalism on the part of pupils.

Failure of the teachers to influence the children to conduct themselves properly on the street, in public places, and in their intercourse with others.

Failure on the part of parents to appreciate the importance of a common school education, and lack of interest in the education of their children, the teachers who have charge of them, the work that is being done, and the results that are being attained.

Willingness on the part of parents to accept an inefficient teacher, provided she is hired at a low salary.

"The natural indolence of the children, and a want of discipline in the home."

"Tardiness, absenteeism, a general spirit of 'don't care.'"

"A lack of the reasoning power in the pupils."

"A tendency on the part of the pupils to let the teacher do the work."

Listlessness and mental incapacity on the part of pupils and teachers.

"Certain parents and citizens in the community are always ready to pick up every little thing in connection with the school that they can criticise, and are not willing to help the school officials and the superintendent in maintaining better schools. A whole book could be written on this subject."

"Indifference of parents, varied sometimes by local feuds and animosities which creep into the school."

"The number of pupils who leave school before they are 15 years of age is alarming."

"A lack of the ability on the part of pupils to concentrate their attention upon the work in hand, and devote themselves continuously to a mastery of the studies they are pursuing."

"We need better educated parents."

"Wont consolidate."

"Schools are gradually growing smaller."

"Nothing very discouraging, but lots of room for improvement."

Failure on the part of parents to co-operate, and a willingness to have a poor school rather than have their children transported to one where they may be well taught.

Too many small schools; too many classes; and no desire on the part of parents to improve the school privileges of their children.

Failure to locate the schoolhouses at such places as to accommodate the largest number of pupils with the smallest distances of travel.

"Bad condition of the school buildings, the entire want of apparatus, and a lack of interest on the part of parents."

"Bad spelling."

"Defective gradation."

"A continual finding fault by a certain class of people we have in town, because of the comfort which they get out of growling."

Failure to care for school property, and particularly text-books.

"Pupils think they know it all, and parents uphold them in this opinion, and thus prevent the grading of the school and such an arrangement of work as will compel each child to study the subjects which he needs most."

"Lack of money, and little prospect of more."

"A few growlers who think the schools were made for their children only."

"The slowness with which people as a rule accept proposed improvements."

"Too few pupils to make the school interesting."

"Failure to understand the advantages of the town over the district system, and an insistence on schools in divisions where combinations are necessary."

"The inclination of people to believe that anybody can teach school, and of the town to believe that parsimony in school matters is economy."

"A failure of the town to provide suitable appliances, apparatus and books for school libraries."

"Class feeling, and a desire to rush through their studies without being thorough."

"Unsanitary conditions in and about the school buildings."

THE FOLLOWING REPLIES WERE GIVEN TO THE QUESTION, "WHAT CHANGES IN THE PUPILS WOULD MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR THEM TO DERIVE GREATER BENEFITS FROM THE SCHOOL?"

More self-reliance, perseverance, attention to studies and willingness to work.

"Such changes as would make them comprehend that improvement comes from exertion."

An appreciation of the value of an education.

An understanding on their part that the teacher is to be obeyed without question.

"The habit of being truthful."

"A realizing sense of what it means to acquire an education."

"More respect for the teachers, school property and people generally."

"An ambition to do more thorough work even at the risk of being put back."

"A higher estimate of the importance of deportment, honor, courtesy."

"More enthusiastic work and willingness to study outside of school hours, and a feeling that they have got to dig if they get there."

A desire to master what they are studying before they take advanced work.

"Different dispositions as much as anything."

"A greater thirst for knowledge."

"Stop using rum and tobacco."

"A desire to obtain a good education, which is wanting in the majority of the pupils of this town."

"Greater industry and better training at home."

"A more definite aim."

A desire to know things outside of text-books.

More studious habits, more energetic work, and a higher moral standard.

"More reverence for and politeness toward their teachers."

"I think the pupils are all right; but would do better if surrounded by proper conditions, and encouraged by a more general interest on the part of their parents."

A realization that they should learn lessons for the good which they get out of them, and not for the purpose of reciting them.

A desire to remain in school until they have acquired a good English education.

An interest in good books.

"Study more and run the streets less."

"Fewer social engagements, and number of appearances in dramatic entertainments, dances, etc., etc., etc."

THE FOLLOWING REPLIES WERE GIVEN TO THE QUESTION, "IN WHAT WAYS DO PARENTS HINDER THE WORK OF THE SCHOOL?"

"By finding fault with the teacher in the presence of the children, slandering the teacher, allowing the children to remain at home upon foolish pretexts, and a general don't care spirit about the whole matter."

"If the superintendent or teacher does not please the parents, some will hunt for faults even when they know they are seriously injuring the school."

"Some of the parents do not know what the schools are or should be, and therefore, antagonize the school because of their ignorance."

"By not being in sympathy with the teacher, not interested in the work of their children, and failing to insist upon prompt and regular attendance."

"By indifference or hostility."

"By acting upon the idea that the teacher can make the school what it should be, do her own work and the work of the children, and that she does not need their help or encouragement."

"By acting as though they were from two to ten years younger than their children."

"By upholding their children in bad behavior."

"By interfering with the teacher in her work, unjustly criticizing the methods on the report of the children, without ever visiting the school-room."

"By keeping the boys at home." "It is a misfortune to be born a boy in this land of potatoes."

"By sympathizing with the children in their petty grievances."

"By pretending to believe all their children say when they know they are telling falsehoods, and then forcing the teacher out of school by making things unpleasant."

By insisting that their children shall take the advanced work before they have mastered the work which preceded it.

"By neighborhood quarrels."

"By encouraging the children to have their own way at school."

"By finding fault with every move the teacher makes."

"By not seconding the teacher's efforts."

"By magnifying the teacher's faults as reported by the children when these children rule the home."

"By devising excuses to keep the children at home."

"By allowing their children to rule the home, and encouraging them to do the same at school."

"Usually the parents are divided into two factions; those who are ready to lend a helping hand and those who are constantly putting obstacles in the way."

"By not getting acquainted with the teacher, and not letting the teacher know the defects in their children."

"By always being ready to find fault with everything that is done in the school, and opposing the introduction of new methods which they criticise as new fangled fads."

"By indifference to educational matters in general."

"By their ignorance of modern methods."

"By encouraging the pupils to pursue a whimsical course of study according to their fancy."

"By sending their children to school for sixteen weeks, and into the mills the remainder of the year."

"By opposing the teacher employed because the superintendent did not employ a certain relative of influential families in the neighborhood, whose good influence had long ceased to exist."

"By misjudging and misrepresenting the school because of false statements made by the children."

"By voting against the consolidation of schools."

"By not voting money for free high schools, or books, and only \$25. for repairs."

THE FOLLOWING REPLIES WERE GIVEN TO THE QUESTION, "IN WHAT WAYS MIGHT PARENTS ASSIST IN MAKING THE SCHOOLS MORE SERVICEABLE TO THEIR CHILDREN?"

"By keeping still until they know that they don't know."

By requiring their children to attend regularly, giving the teacher the benefit of their cordial support, visiting the schools and voting more money to maintain them.

By giving the children proper training at home, and assisting the teacher in her efforts to train them while they are at school.

By furnishing them good reading in the home, and talking with their children about their school work, and showing them that they place a high estimate upon it.

"By a willingness to do what is best for their children."

"By encouraging their children to obey orders, by showing more interest in the teacher and the work done by their children, and by visiting the schools frequently enough to be thoroughly familiar with everything connected with them."

"By impressing upon them the necessity of an education."

"By instructing them to obey the teacher and to try to learn their lessons."

"By compelling regular attendance, refusing to listen to their complaints, encouraging them to study at home, and teaching them by example to tell the truth."

"By knowing the facts before they sit in judgment upon the teacher."

By allowing no tale-bearing, and encouraging a respect for the teacher, and insisting upon regular attendance.

"By insisting upon the employment of teachers who are better qualified to teach, and by voting more money for repairs."

"By impressing upon the children that they are to attend regularly and obey the teacher promptly."

"By acquainting themselves with modern methods, and supporting teachers in their efforts to introduce them into the schools."

"By not believing all the reports heard before hearing both sides."

"By insisting that their children shall prepare their lessons each day, and encouraging them to do some of their studying at home."

"By extending social courtesies to the teacher."

"By teaching their children good manners at home, and insisting that they shall be courteous to their teacher and schoolmates."

By supplying their children with some good books, and encouraging them to read at home.

"If something could be done to induce the parents to visit the schools, I think it would have a wholesome effect."

"By having the boys and girls understand that they are blest with schools."

"By providing better schoolhouses, and discontinuing the small schools."

"By exerting a good influence over the children in their homes."

THE FOLLOWING REPLIES WERE GIVEN TO THE QUESTION, "IN WHAT WAYS DO THE CHURCHES INTEREST THEMSELVES IN THE SCHOOL?"

"Not at all."

"None whatever."

"No churches in town."

"No connection."

"In no way."

"Cannot say."

"Not the slightest."

"By opening their meeting-houses for any school purposes, and giving their influence to sustain a high grade of morals."

"By endeavoring to secure Christian teachers, and by throwing their influence solidly on the teacher's side."

"They do nothing."

"By urging parents to send their children to school, and by visiting the schools."

"No active interest."

"I am sorry to say that they do not have the interest in the schools they should."

"In no way that I can see."

"Not to any extent."

"Pastors visit the schools."

"They are all heathens in this section."

"Their influence is not felt."

"We have five churches in the summer, but they have not interested themselves in the schools to my knowledge."

"They provide social entertainments and religious meetings for the children living in their vicinity."

"They take a healthy interest and strive to add to their usefulness."

"Our pastor usually visits the schools as often as once a week."

"Our church is trying to start a free Kindergarten."

"By organizing Sunday schools in the several districts."

"They do all they can to keep up the interest in the schools."

"By urging the children to sign pledges of total abstinence from the use of intoxicating liquors, tobacco, profanity, etc."

"By urging upon the children the importance of good manners, good morals, regular attendance and faithfulness to their duties."

"Two of our churches hold meetings in recognition of the opening of the school year. These exercises are encouraging and helpful to teachers and pupils."

THE FOLLOWING REPLIES WERE GIVEN TO THE QUESTION, "DOES THEIR INFLUENCE TEND TO HELP THE SUPERINTENDENT IN SECURING THE BEST TEACHERS, AND INDUCING THE PUPILS TO DO THE BEST WORK?"

"No."

"No, not directly or indirectly."

"No perceptible influence in any direction."

"I am not aware that they do."

"I think they do."

"Sometimes perhaps, but not often."

"I do not think they take much interest in the schools."

"Just at this time the school shares with the church the opposition of the imps of Satan at _____ on _____."

"If they used the influence which God gave them, it would be well, but in this age it is laid aside for personal gain."

"As a rule I find the best and most willing workers among the pupils who attend Sunday school and church."

"No; rather the opposite, except so far as each society is anxious to have teachers from its church."

"They help in every good work."

THE FOLLOWING REPLIES WERE GIVEN TO THE QUESTION, "HAVE THE POLITICIANS OF YOUR TOWN EXERTED A HELPFUL OR HARMFUL INFLUENCE IN THE SELECTION OF TEACHERS OR MANAGEMENT OF YOUR SCHOOLS?"

"They do not care anything about them, evidently."

"They have neither helped nor hindered."

"Not particularly helpful in any direction."

"They seem to have mistaken ideas of economy, and are ignorant of the best methods, and know little about the best school books."

"Have nothing to do with our schools."

"No influence."

"Are helpful."

"No influence either way."

"They have not interfered."

"No politicians here except myself."

"The politicians are so good that they are unwilling to meddle with the schools."

"The politicians of ——— are a common sense lot, and do not hinder in any way in the management of the schools."

"The influence of the leading men of both parties is helpful in raising money and employing the best teachers."

"No politics in our school work."

"This is a delicate question. The school officers depend upon the politicians for election, and if things are not carried out to suit them, a new board is liable to go in."

"Our town is non-partisan on school questions, and the politicians not only do no harm, but are helpful in securing good schools."

"Political interference in the school of ——— is at a minimum."

"Have no part in the management of the schools of ———."

"Do not mix politics and school matters."

THE FOLLOWING REPLIES WERE GIVEN TO THE QUESTION, "HAVE ANY OTHER PERSONS OR ORGANIZATIONS EXERTED A HELPFUL OR HARMFUL INFLUENCE IN THE SAME PARTICULARS?"

"The W. C. T. U. has supported the superintendent and given its moral support to the schools."

"The King's Daughters have in years past been a help to our schools by assisting needy pupils."

"The Juvenile Lodge of Good Templars has been an unmitigated curse to our public school."

"The Juvenile Templars have been very helpful to our schools."

"The rum hotels and their bums are a blighting curse here."

"The N. P. W. C. T. U. has been very helpful."

"None worth mentioning."

"The Patrons of Husbandry have taken an active interest in the schools, and have helped them in many ways."

"Yes. There are several which are ever ready to place obstacles in the way."

"In the town of ——— I find that the grange and the I. O. G. T. help the schools, and I presume they would do the same in ——— if they were run as they should be."

"Persons have helped, but organizations have not."

"The grange believes in the school."

"The Good Templars and the W. C. T. U. have been very helpful in teaching temperance."

"Teachers' associations have done a great work in stimulating our teachers to a better preparation for their duties."

THE FOLLOWING REPLIES WERE GIVEN TO THE QUESTION, "WHAT CHANGES IN THE SCHOOL LAWS OF THIS STATE WOULD TEND TO INCREASE THE USEFULNESS OF THE SCHOOLS?"

"A repeal of the free text-book law, or else so amend it as to give the books to the pupils absolutely, the pupils to provide themselves with books if unnecessarily destroyed." (3)

"Abolish the school committee, and let the superintendent do the work, as the superintending school committee is simply a board of appeal for grumblers." (6)

"Require members of the school committee to be examined before they are eligible for positions on the board of education, and have the examination of such a character as to show whether they are fifty years behind the times or up to date in their ideas of what schools should be." (3)

"Change the law regarding the transportation of pupils from *may* convey to *shall* convey." (2)

"Such a compulsory law as will require pupils between six and sixteen years of age to attend school for at least twenty-four weeks during each school year." (4)

"Such a change as will provide for paying the members of school committees for services rendered." (4)

"Such changes as will place the schools entirely under the management of State officials."

"Such changes as will permit pupils to attend high schools in adjoining towns without paying tuition, if high schools are not maintained in their own towns."

"Such changes as will divide the State school fund among the towns on the basis of the average attendance of children attending the schools."

"A law making State examination of teachers compulsory."

"A law permitting towns to unite for the purpose of employing a superintendent of schools, with a provision that the State shall give the towns taking advantage of this law a sum equal to the amount raised for superintendence."

"A law requiring all superintendents to submit to an examination before entering upon their duties."

"A law regulating the age at which teachers may be employed."

"The adoption by the State of a Course of Study, and a provision that towns shall not receive State aid unless the work prescribed is done."

"County examining boards, and graded certificates are the next great reforms needed in our school laws."

"A law compelling towns of more than a certain population to maintain a free high school for a certain number of weeks each year."

"A change in the law increasing the amount of the mill tax for school purposes."

"Repeal of the law abolishing the district system." (1)

"Such a change in the law as will prevent a member of the committee from serving as a teacher."

"A law preventing all towns from receiving State aid if they maintain any school with an average attendance of less than twelve pupils."

"A law placing the rural schools under the charge of county superintendents."

"We have law enough."

"A radical change to a State Board of Education like Massachusetts." (1)

"A law compelling towns to raise more money for school purposes."

"Change section 6, page 5 of school laws so that it would read 'ninety cents' instead of 'eighty cents.' "

"A law compelling towns to unite and employ a skilled superintendent."

"A law providing for a uniformity of text-books throughout the State."

"A law requiring all teachers to pass a county or State examination before teaching."

"A law permitting towns to elect superintendents instead of having them elected by school committees." (1)

"A law providing for county superintendents who are specially trained for their work."

"A law forbidding the marriage of good teachers."

"A law compelling towns to furnish respectable schoolhouses."

"A law providing that the erection of all schoolhouses shall be placed in charge of the selectmen of the town."

"A law providing that superintendents and teachers, when once elected, shall serve until dismissed for cause."

"A law providing that superintendents shall act as truant officers."

"A law reducing the number of members of the superintending school committee to three."

"A law providing for a State Board of Examiners."

"A law requiring towns to furnish necessary apparatus and suitable appliances for the proper conducting of the schools."

"A law providing that no person under eighteen years of age shall be eligible as teacher in the public schools of Maine."

"Repeal of the law giving the town the right to instruct the school committee in the suspension of schools."

"A law providing for a more permanent tenure of office of teachers."

"A law giving to some State official the authority to stop towns from receiving State aid until they have provided suitable school buildings,

employed competent school teachers and furnished necessary text-books, apparatus and supplies."

"A law requiring towns which receive State aid to employ teachers holding State Certificates."

"A law to compel teachers to register."

"The truancy law should have more teeth."

"A law to compel children of shiftless, unthrifty parents to attend school until they have acquired a good English education."

SUMMARY OF SPECIAL STATISTICS.

It is apparent from these returns that but a small per cent. of the superintendents are giving their whole time to superintendence, and that a large majority devote the most of their time to other employments; that a few of these officials have received the scholastic and professional training needed to fit them for their labors; but that a majority of them have never enjoyed these advantages. It is equally clear that too large a per cent. of them have never had the necessary experience in the schoolroom to qualify them to be judges of teachers and their work.

The record shows that only a small number of these officials have read, or are reading educational books or papers; and that they, therefore, can know but little about the methods approved by experts in this field of labor.

While it is true that there are some graded school yards, suitable out-houses and excellent school buildings, it is also true that the number is altogether too small, and that the number which does not come up to this standard is much too large. The returns indicate that the towns are failing to do their full duty by the schools in not providing suitable school furniture, necessary apparatus and appliances, and by not making necessary repairs.

An astonishingly large per cent. of the teachers have not received that scholastic or professional training which it is necessary for one to have who is to acquit himself creditably as an instructor. It is evident that many of the teachers are not sufficiently interested in supplying their deficiencies to attend teachers' meetings or summer schools. All of these facts account for the brief tenure of office which is so great a discredit to the teachers of the State. It is cause for serious alarm when it is known that so large a per cent. of the teachers are teaching their first year, that so large a number have taught so few years consecutively, that so few have taught in the same school for any considerable length of time, and that so small a number are retained in the same school for a series of years.

It is evident from the returns that we have many excellent teachers, capable of doing a high grade of work, but the returns are entirely clear upon the point that this number is not as large as it should be in a state employing about five thousand teachers each year. The weak points of the teachers may be summarized as want of scholarship, lack of personality, want of professional training, and inability to give instruction

and exert a wholesome influence over those with whom they come in contact. The most encouraging things in our schools are good teachers and interested and ambitious children. The most discouraging things are incompetent teachers, parents who are willing to injure the school to gratify personal pique or prejudice, and an indisposition to work or attend school on the part of the children. The parents hinder the work of the school by captious criticisms, failing to send their children to school regularly, and an unwillingness to help it by encouraging words and sympathetic support.

One is somewhat discouraged to learn that our scientific, literary and philanthropic institutions have so little interest in the condition of the schools or the means of improving them. The case does not improve when we are informed that a large majority of our operatives, farmers, mechanics, manufacturers, business and professional men and politicians have so slight an interest in our schools as to have practically failed to attract the attention of the superintendents of the several towns.

The changes demanded in the school law are in the direction of giving greater power to school officials, and placing such authority in the hands of the State as will insure expert supervision, competent teachers, regular attendance on the part of the children and an honest and economic expenditure of school funds.

The most encouraging feature of all these reports is found in the fact that the superintendents are overwhelmingly in favor of such a supervision of the examination of teachers by the State as will insure the employment of teachers who have suitable scholastic training.

The most discouraging item in all these records is the conclusive evidence which they furnish that more than \$200,000 are expended annually for the maintenance of schools that are of slight service to the children who attend them. The recognition of this fact by the officials who have the best opportunities of judging of the merits of schools, and the desire to remedy these unfortunate conditions give promise of better days for the public schools of Maine in the future.

It is hoped that every clergyman will seriously consider the question of emulating the example set by two churches in a certain town, of having religious services in recognition of the opening of the schools each year. It is also hoped that a large number of the representatives of the Great Teacher will remember the noble work done for the public schools by the old time ministers, and that they will renew their interest in these institutions. If these exercises could become the general custom of the State it is impossible to estimate the help they would be to the schools.

These special returns force upon the examiner of the documents the conviction that there are a considerable number of men and women in the State who are peculiarly qualified to do most excellent work as superintendents of schools, provided they could devote their entire time to this work, and were paid a reasonable sum for their services. These facts are so apparent on the face of the returns that one cannot help having great courage for work in this field, and a large faith in what the future is to bring to the schools of Maine.

STATISTICAL CURIOSITIES.

The people of Maine should not expect any material improvement in the schools so long as only 3 per cent. of the superintendents attend Summer Schools, and only 11 per cent. attend any of the County Teachers' Associations which are held during any given year. Such a meagre attendance reveals a want of interest on the part of these officials which helps materially in fixing the responsibility for certain conditions found in so many of the schools.

It is somewhat instructive to note that the most of the superintendents who are opposed to State examination of teachers belong to one of the three following classes: They are teaching themselves; they have relatives who are teaching; or they have a limited common school education.

It is not intended to convey the impression that all of the superintendents who are opposed to this change are grossly ignorant. Some of these officials who have a liberal education, or who have no apparent selfish interest in the appointment of teachers, expressed their opposition to the plan. But the number who are thus opposed is so limited that they are but a small per cent. of the whole number."

It is also true that most of the superintendents who have only a common school education are in favor of such examinations, and that substantially all who have been liberally educated favor such a law.

If it were not so serious a matter it would be amusing to note the objections urged by some of the superintendents to State examinations. Among the reasons assigned are the following:

Our schools are very backward, and do not require trained teachers.

The pupils in our schools are very young, and we can employ teachers of limited education.

Our people do not want to pay for the services of professional teachers.

If teachers were examined by the State, we would have to pay much higher salaries than at the present.

Teachers were not examined when I was a boy, and I am decidedly opposed to their examination at present.

The most of the superintendents who object to these examinations report that they have schools which are properly described in the last report as "poor" or "very poor."

One superintendent recommends a law which would impose a fine of one thousand dollars or imprisonment for life upon any parent who enters a complaint against the school upon evidence furnished by his own child, if he has not made personal investigations of the matter.

One superintendent entered the complaint that people who pay large taxes, but have no children, were disposed to object to the amount of tax assessed for school purposes.

A large proportion of all the superintendents complained that parents interfere with the work of the schools by telling the children what to do and what not to do, even if such commands directly contravene the requirements made by the teacher, and that they go to the school building and in the presence of the pupils, upbraid her for what she does or

does not do. It seems almost incredible that any considerable number of parents should be guilty of such offences; and it seems equally incredible that superintendents will permit such flagrant and deliberate violations of the law without taking the necessary steps to have the offenders punished. The statutes are entirely clear upon this point, and it is the duty of school officials not only to support but to defend the teachers in the discharge of their duties.

One superintendent reports that "amusements are killing our children." A number of others refer to this subject in such a way as to indicate that the complaint is a general one. One of the preachers of the State, who is also serving as superintendent of schools says, "the children need to be endowed with more capacity, and reduced about one-third in number." This announcement hardly bears out certain teachings which have been supposed to be based upon passages found in Genesis. He also makes record of a statement given by a parent who said, "I got my education off the street; I don't care if my boy gets his there."

One superintendent says, "I have an idea that the children need to be taught *how* to study." This is an idea which has been slowly creeping into the minds of educators for a number of centuries, and whenever it takes firm hold of the teachers of the country, then, we shall see better work done than has ever been accomplished.

One of the superintendents recommends that a child be whipped by his parents every time he finds fault with the school or the teacher.

There can be no possible excuse for the superintendents having to report that thirty-two per cent. of all the teachers of the State are employed without being examined as provided in the statutes. Possibly this misfeasance in office is accounted for by the fact that so large a number of the teachers are relatives of the members of the superintending school committee, or associated with them in such a way as to secure their appointments without the regular examination.

It is almost past belief that towns are willing to carry this matter of employing relatives of committeemen to the extent that some towns have. One town reported that there were seven teachers employed, and that six of them were related to some member of the school committee. In another town seven of the thirteen teachers employed are kindred of these officials, while in still another town having but five schools and five members of the committee, it is reported that all these schools are taught by persons who are serving as members of the committee. No comment which could be made upon this condition of affairs could be so scathing as a simple statement of the facts themselves.

One town enjoys the honorable distinction of having a teacher who has taught fifty years. Another breaks the record by electing a superintendent who is eighty years of age. So far as can be learned, both these persons are in sympathy with the spirit of the age, and are keenly alive to the changed condition of society which calls for great changes in the management of school interests.

One superintendent reports the strong points of his teachers as, "campaigning for schools, and a love of money." A man of peace, who

practices what he preaches, writes that the most encouraging thing in his schools has been, "fights." Another clergyman says that the greatest service which the parents can render the school is, "to keep still until they know that they don't know."

A superintendent also reports that the politicians of his town are so good that they do not meddle with the schools, and another insists upon a law forbidding the marriage of good teachers.

It is somewhat surprising to learn that there is at least one person in the State of Maine who objects to having a dictionary in the public schools because bad words are found in it.

From the appearance of a good many school yards it is easy to understand how some parents think it foolishness to have lawns in front of schoolhouses, and that it is equally foolish for teachers and pupils to cultivate flowers in the school yards; and that the decoration of school-rooms with flowers, plants and leaves is a waste of time and effort. We should expect such people to say that general exercises and lessons on morals, manners, plants, animals and minerals, were unnecessary because such things were not taught when they were children. But it is not easy to conceive of the arguments which a parent would urge against teachers giving lessons on distinguished men and women, noted events, local and national history, items of current news, and such general work as would give the children some intelligent idea of what has been done, or is being done in the world.

It is evident that criticisms of the character indicated above have been so generally made as to attract the attention of a large number of superintendents. As long as parents are willing to oppose having such work in the schools so long we must expect the teachers to fail to be of any material service to the children.

A Study
of the Schools
of Northeastern Maine



By the State
Superintendent
of Public Schools

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A STUDY OF THE SCHOOLS OF NORTH-EASTERN MAINE.

During the past three years the State superintendent has annually visited the schools of northeastern Maine for the purpose of learning their condition and devising means for their improvement.

In the following pages will be found an account of the work done. The sketch includes a brief history of the settlement of this section of the State, an outline of the development of its schools and a detailed statement of work being done in them at the present time.

THE ACADIANS IN NORTHERN MAINE.

ORIGIN AND CHARACTER.

The story of the expulsion of the Acadians from their quiet homes "on the shores of the basin of Minas," is familiar to all students of history and to all readers of Longfellow's beautiful poem, *Evangeline*. Whether we regard it as an act of wanton and heartless cruelty, or as a political measure necessary for the safety of the English Colonies, it stands out sharply in the history of the race as one of the most cruel examples of "Man's inhumanity to man." A rural and peace loving people, quietly engaged in agricultural pursuits were, without warning, seized and hurried from their homes, and dispersed throughout the inhabited portions of the continent. Families were broken up, parents torn from their children and husbands from their wives, and carried to distant parts of the land never to be reunited on earth; and all because they were true to the instincts of their race, to their sentiments of patriotism and to the religion in whose teachings they had been nurtured.

The territory now known as Nova Scotia, originally called Acadia, was ceded by France to Great Britain in the treaty of Utrecht, which in 1713 closed the war known in America as Queen Anne's War and in Europe as the War of the Spanish Succession. The treaty of 1713 did not determine the boundaries of Acadia, and in 1744 the war known in America as King George's War and in Europe as the War of the Austrian Succession, again brought the English and French Colonies to

open hostilities. By the treaty of Aix-la Chapelle in 1748, the war was terminated, all conquests were mutually restored, but the boundaries between the British and French possessions in America were still left unsettled. Disputes and quarrels between the English and French Colonies immediately ensued. The French insisted that Acadia included only that territory comprised within the limits of the present province of Nova Scotia, while the English colonists claimed that it embraced the entire region east of the Penobscot and south of the St. Lawrence. The quarrel was taken up by the parent nations and resulted in the war known in American history as the French and Indian War and in Europe as the Seven Years War.

The spring of 1755 found the American colonies engaged in this contest, which proved to be the last as well as the severest of the intercolonial struggles. Early in that year an expedition against the French in Nova Scotia was planned by the English colonies, and the land forces were placed under the command of Gen. John Winslow, for whom the town of Winslow on the Kennebec river was named. The expedition reached the Bay of Fundy in June, and the French forts in the province were speedily reduced and the whole region east of the Penobscot was brought under British authority. An attempt was then made to induce the Acadians to take the oath of allegiance to the crown of England; but they being French by birth and Catholics in religious faith, demurred at taking this oath unless it was modified in certain respects. A council of the commanders of the land and naval forces was held, and it was considered that this colony of French sympathizers was a standing menace to the perpetuity of English rule in that province. It was, therefore, determined that the settlement should be broken up and the Acadian colonists scattered throughout the British possessions in North America.

On the eastern coast of Nova Scotia an arm of the Bay of Fundy stretches far up into the land and into this sheltered basin, known as the Basin of Minas, flows the river Gaspereau upon which some of the French forts were located. Not far from the mouth of this river was situated, at the time of the English expedition in the summer of 1755, the peaceful village of Grand Prè. The soil in the immediate vicinity was fertile, and the frugal and industrious French peasants had brought it to a high state of cultivation. Here in the early autumn of that fateful year, the inhabitants of this beautiful region were dwelling in fancied security and were happy in the prospect of an abundant harvest. They were a quiet, peace loving people, simple in their habits, of a light and joyous temperament, contented and happy in their rural occupations.

On the 5th day of September, 1755, the inhabitants of Grand Prè were summoned to meet in the little church in which they were wont to worship, to hear an important communication from the English king. Suspecting no treachery and dreaming of no harm, the colonists filled the church to the doors, curious to hear what their new rulers might have to say to them. When the building was filled to its utmost capacity, the doors were closed and guards placed around the church. Gen. Winslow then addressed the assembly, charging the Acadians with disloyalty to the

king, with having aided the French and Indians in their raids upon the colonists of New England, and with being a constant menace to the peace and safety of the English settlements. He closed his harangue by reading to them the following cruel sentence of doom: "Know then that your lands, tenements, cattle and live stock of all kinds are forfeited to the crown, with all other effects of yours except your money and household goods, which you will be allowed to carry with you; and that yourselves and families are to be removed from this province to places suiting his majesty's pleasure—in the meantime to remain in custody under the inspection and control of the troops I have the honor to command." Stricken with horror at the heartless doom, the assembly was dismissed though still kept under guard by Winslow's troops.

At the other Acadian settlements the same sentence was read and preparations for the removal of the heart-broken people were at once commenced. At Grand Prè, the principal settlement, the embarkation was ordered to commence during the week following the fatal 5th of September. The first band of exiles, consisting of nearly 150 young men, was marched to the shore amid the tears and lamentations of their mothers, sisters and sweethearts, and the sad farewells of their grief stricken fathers. During the following three months the work of disruption and deportation continued as fast as vessels could be had for the purpose. In the month of December the last of the colony, a weary company of sad-eyed, broken hearted women, whose husbands and children had been torn from them and carried on board other vessels, sailed away from the beautiful "Basin of Minas," and the cruel deed of destruction was complete.

Of all the exile laden vessels that parted from the shores of Acadia no two found the same harbor. This quiet, peaceable people were scattered from the Penobscot to the Rio Grande. Some of them were landed and distributed among the several settlements from Maine to Georgia, and numbers of them, yearning for kindred and friends, started to make the weary forest march across the wilderness to the Mississippi and thence to the French settlements in Louisiana.

Prof. Edward Everett Hale, Jr., in his introduction to an edition of Longfellow's *Evangeline*, uses this language:

"The New England Colonies saw that unless some severe measures were taken Nova Scotia could not be saved to England, and that Nova Scotia should remain English was necessary to the safety of New England. It was resolved, not by England but by New England, that the Acadians should be dispossessed of their country. At the particular time, the English settlers were in alarm at Braddock's defeat. It was a harsh act, but it seemed to be an act necessary to self-preservation. Not only must the Acadians be taken from Acadia, but they could not be allowed to retire to the friendly colonies, thereby to strengthen the power of England's enemies. They must be brought to the English colonies and scattered among them, lest, being together, they should do some harm. About six thousand Acadians were taken from their homes and sent to the various English colonies; about three thousand five hundred



EXHIBIT OF WORK DONE IN THE SCHOOLS BY CHILDREN
WHO LIVE IN THE RURAL HOMES OF N. E. MAINE.



AN OLD-FASHIONED HOME—N. E. MAINE.

escaped and found their way to Canada. The act seems to be one of the horrible necessities of war. Doubtless it is no more to be justified on that account than is the slaughter of more than six thousand in one great battle; but, on the whole, not more brutal or inhuman. When we read 'Evangeline,' we need not feel fiercely toward the English (or, more exactly toward the New Englanders) as if they had devised an unprovoked act of pure cruelty.

As time went on, a few of them found their way back to their old homes, as we learn in the last lines of the poem. But a larger number (among them the Basil of the poem) found their way to Louisiana, which, although then belonging to Spain, was still French in feeling. Here they were well received by those of their own language and religion. They found homes, as the poet tells us, in the fertile country by the river Têche, where they settled comfortably and permanently. 'Their descendants are to be found in every parish of lower Louisiana' writes Alcée Fortier. 'They form an important and useful part of our population.' Although a simple farming people, they have had some men of eminence in the State and their lot has been by no means miserable."

While, as is related above, many of the doomed Acadians escaped into Canada, a hardy band, avoiding their English guards, made their way into New Brunswick. Finding a home for a time with the aboriginal tribes of that Province, they soon made their way to the river St. John and made a temporary settlement a short distance above Fredericton. But the fear of pursuit and capture by their relentless enemies was ever before them, and in the spring and early summer of 1756 they procured boats and pushed on up the river carrying their canoes and meager effects around the mighty cataract of Grand Falls, and settled at different points on the beautiful intervalles along the banks of the upper St. John. Here, from time to time, they were joined by members of the unfortunate colony who had escaped to other portions of New Brunswick, and later by many of those who had been landed from English ships in parts of Maine and Massachusetts. Thus the settlement along the upper St. John continued to increase and, being a prolific people, and receiving frequent additions by immigration from Canada, before many years they had made an almost continuous settlement on both sides of the river from the Grand Falls to the mouth of the St. Francis.

From the fact that the first settlement was made at a point on the St. John opposite the mouth of the Madawaska river, the whole region soon became known among the French settlers as "Madawaska," and it is customary still to refer to it by that name. From that portion of this "Madawaska Territory" lying in the State of Maine, have since been formed the towns and plantations of Hamlin, Van Buren, Grand Isle, Madawaska, Frenchville, Fort Kent, St. John and St. Francis, all lying along the banks of the beautiful St. John river. In addition to these there are south of Fort Kent, the plantations of Wallagrass, New Canada, Eagle Lake and Winterville, and of Van Buren the plantations of Cyr and Connor, all inhabited almost entirely by French Catholics. There are also scattered settlements in adjoining unorganized townships. The

population of these towns and plantations, with the outlying settlements, is to-day nearly, if not quite 12,000 souls, while the number in the parishes on the opposite side of the river, of the same race and faith, must swell the total of the French population on the upper St. John to upwards of 20,000.

For some time after the first settlement was made opposite the mouth of the Madawaska river, no Catholic clergyman was settled in this region. As the inhabitants increased, however, the faithful fathers of that church found their way to this isolated and scattered portion of the flock, and now in every parish on either side of the St. John and in the settlements remote from the river, are church edifices more or less costly and pretentious in which the rites of the Catholic church are administered and which are periodically thronged with faithful worshippers. The people of this section are a simple minded, home loving people, clinging fondly to the traditions, the manners and customs, and the religious faith of their ancestors.

Until within a comparatively few years they were, as far as their own feelings, language and intercourse were concerned, as distinct from the other portions of the State of Maine as though they were indeed a separate nation. Their commerce and intercourse were carried on almost entirely among themselves, and nearly all the necessities of life, which they were unable to produce, came to them from Canada. Although the same thing is still true to a great extent, yet a marked change has taken place within the past few years. During that time large numbers of the men of the region have each year gone to work for a time in the extensive potato fields in the valley of the Aroostook, and many have worked for a portion of the year in the great hemlock forests farther south, peeling the bark for the large tanneries of that section. This has given them a large measure of intercourse with the English speaking people of Northern Maine, and each year they carry back to their homes an increased appreciation of the fact that they are citizens, in common with them, of the same great State, and are like them amenable to its laws and sharers of its bounty and protection.

EDUCATIONAL HISTORY.

From the time of the settlement of the northeast boundary of the State and United States by the Ashburton treaty in 1842, by which the status of this people as American citizens was definitely fixed, the question of their education has received attention. For a long period the whole section settled by them was legally known for school purposes as the "Madawaska Territory," and formed, as it were, a single school district under the control and direction of a State Agent. The legislature made annual appropriations for the support of schools therein, which were expended as wisely and effectively as the conditions would allow. These agents were without exception men of intelligence; having the confidence of the people for whose well being they were laboring, and thoroughly conver-



TWO REPRESENTATIVE FAMILIES—N. E. MAINE.

sant with their customs, feelings and needs. Under this system and by their efforts a beginning was made in the education of this people, but apparently a feeble beginning. As late as 1866, twenty-four years after they had become a part of our commonwealth, the report of Col. David Page of Fort Kent, who was then the State's Agent, shows that there were "but seven schoolhouses in the whole territory, most of them quite small and illy constructed," and that during the year but twenty schools were maintained with an aggregate of 614 pupils, 322 of whom studied English. In 1871, the last year during which the schools were maintained under this plan, the number of schools had increased to forty-seven, two of which, those at Fort Kent and Frenchville respectively, were denominated high schools.

In 1872, with the passage of the act establishing the mill tax, the policy outlined above was changed. By a special act the townships included within the Territory and organized as towns or plantations were put on an equal footing with the other towns and plantations in the State so far as sharing in the distribution of State moneys, provided they should organize school districts, maintain schools whose discipline and instruction should be in the English language, and should annually raise for the maintenance of schools certain definite sums fixed in the act. Under this law the seed planted under the former system sprung into life and began to bear fruit. In 1876, four years after its inauguration and ten years after Col. Page had made his report cited above, in eleven towns and plantations were maintained eighty-three schools attended by 2,075 children. There were, however, but forty-two schoolhouses in these towns and plantations. Thirty-five of these buildings were of the most primitive character, and not more than three were in condition fit for the accommodation of schools in other than the warmer months of the year.

The schools thus established and maintained were necessarily of a very elementary character. Notwithstanding the special requirements of the law governing them, but few could be fairly considered as disciplined and instructed in the English language. There was a dearth of any kind of text-books, and the larger part of those used were in French; nor was it possible to find teachers who could read and speak English well enough to meet the requirements of law; for of necessity they must be familiar with the native French spoken by their pupils in order to teach efficiently the rudiments of English. To meet this latter condition it was necessary to provide some efficient agency for the training of the native boys and girls to meet the demand for properly qualified teachers. Accordingly the legislature of 1877 authorized the trustees of the State normal schools to establish within the limits of this territory two schools to be maintained annually at least twenty weeks, whose special work should be the preparation of teachers for the common schools therein. These schools were established at Fort Kent and Van Buren, and the terms were so arranged that the same teachers were in charge of both. The school at Van Buren was subsequently, for local and other reasons, transferred to Grand Isle. In accordance with an act of the legislature of 1886 the two

schools were united, and became the Madawaska Training School which was permanently located at Fort Kent. There a large, commodious and well arranged school-building, and a boarding-house large enough to convene all who may desire to take advantage of its privileges, have been erected. Since the establishing of the Training School at Fort Kent a greatly increased interest in the education of the young, especially in the English language, has been developed. The clergymen of the several parishes have lent their aid to this good work, and a noticeable improvement has been made from year to year. In the meantime the free textbook law has changed the conditions existing before its enactment and the schools to-day are fairly well supplied with English books in all branches of instruction. The progress made under the influence of these agencies is indicated by the fact as shown in the report of this department for 1895, that, for the school year ending April 1 of that year, there were maintained in fifteen towns and plantations 118 schools attended by 3,690 pupils, 103 of which schools were in schoolhouses. Of these schools thirty-two were taught by graduates of the Training School, and most of the others were taught by the more advanced students of that school.

AN EXPERIMENT AND ITS RESULTS.

It was with reference to this section and its schools that, in the report of this department for last year, the following statements were made:

"While the State Superintendent has been collecting information from the several sources stated above* he has at the same time been making a careful study of the condition of about a hundred schools in a section of the State where the children and parents speak a foreign language, where but few of the parents can read or write, and where the children seldom hear an English word or see an English book in their homes. It is discovered from the assessors' books that these people are among what may be termed the least prosperous inhabitants of the State. They do not have sufficient means to build or furnish schoolhouses of the kind needed to maintain the best schools. A large majority of the teachers in this section received their training in schools supported in their own territory. The wages paid are not sufficient to make it possible for many of them to attend schools other than those within easy access.

A large proportion of the schools inspected are taught in schoolhouses which are wooden shells, without interior finish and are provided with long tables for desks and benches without backs. The pupils enjoy but few of the advantages which come from associating with people who can help them in study, aid them in their use of English, or direct them in their school work. The most of the homes count for but little in the facilities they furnish, the influence they exert and the material they supply in supplementing the regular work of the school.

*Vide pp. 173-174, Report of 1896.

This section of the State was selected because it furnishes the most unfavorable intellectual and financial conditions of any equal number of communities in the State. If such interest can be developed and such work can be done as will show that superior schools can be maintained in these communities, then all arguments that superior schools can not be maintained in all parts of the State will fall to the ground.

The State Superintendent has not only visited these schools, inspected the work done, but has furnished the teachers with carefully prepared statements as to what subjects shall be taught, and has given suggestions as to the methods to be used in teaching the same. He has requested the teachers to make a careful study of the course of study prepared for the elementary schools of the State, and to make such use of it in their schools as will, in a reasonable time, make it a record of the work done.

He has directed the teachers to give instruction in music, drawing, physical culture, current events, the geography and history of the town, county, State and Nation, sketches of noted men and women in Maine, New England and the United States; to commit to memory selections from standard authors, and to give quotations from choice passages in our literature. He has also expressed not only a willingness, but a desire to have the children taught to read, write and speak in their native tongue, but he has insisted that the regular work of the school, including the discipline and instruction, shall be given in English. It is but just to state that the majority of the school officials and teachers, together with the parents have heartily seconded the efforts which have been made to improve these schools. The circulars which have been sent to the teachers and school officials have been read from the pulpits of the churches, translated into the language which the people understand, and the influence of the spiritual advisers of the people has been thrown heartily and effectively in favor of an honest compliance with the requests made and the instructions given.

The change which has taken place in these schools is hardly less than a revolution. If the improvement continues for another year, the department will be able to place before the people of the State of Maine, in a graphic form, such a record as will show that it is possible to have our rural schools in charge of skillful teachers, who give instruction in the subjects which should be taught in the schools of to-day, and use the methods approved by the best thinkers on educational subjects.

The experiment which has been tried in this new field has been so much more successful than was anticipated that it has given courage to extend the scope of the departure."

PERMANENT WORK

To carry still further the experimental work outlined in the foregoing extract and to test still further the theory which would thus be proved or disproved, that it is both possible and practicable to have our rural schools everywhere in charge of skillful teachers giving instruction in the



ONE OF THE POOREST SCHOOLHOUSES—N. E. MAINE.
(From Report of '95.)

subjects which should be taught in the schools of to-day by methods approved by the best educational thinkers,—it was determined to continue the work another year along the same lines. As the first step in this direction the following circular was prepared and sent to every teacher, superintendent and clergyman in the territory.

SUGGESTIONS.

To the Teachers:

While visiting the schools of Northern Aroostook last September a record was made of the things seen with which I was not pleased, as well as the items that gave me great satisfaction. I hope you will be able, during the coming year, to avoid the following mistakes, if you have been making them in the past.

I noticed in certain schools that the pupils were idle and listless. You must realize that one of the great advantages which children derive from attending school comes from learning to work, to study, to dig out things for themselves.

I hope you will not permit the children to interrupt you with silly questions during the time you are conducting recitations. It is better for the children at their seats to attend to their studies, and do their work without aid from anyone while you are hearing lessons. If they need help, have regular times for assisting them. Do not allow them to run to you on every foolish pretext.

I noticed in several of the schools during the singing and concert exercises that the pupils did not keep together in their work. It is important in these exercises that all speak the same word at the same time. I would suggest that you have but little concert work, except during the singing exercises.

I noticed that many of the teachers insisted that the children speak louder. It is not loudness of tone, but distinctness of pronunciation that is desirable. It is very unfortunate to have children speak in shrill, harsh, grating tones. It is important that you teach them to speak in smooth, clear, distinct tones. It is of equal importance that the teacher use these tones herself. I hope this matter will receive special attention. It was also noticed that in many of the schools the children had what is known as a sing-song tone, and closed their sentences with the rising inflection. Will you see if changes cannot be made in this direction.

Do not allow the children to snap their fingers when they wish to attract your attention. Do not allow them to indulge in any habits or practices which are not consistent with good manners. Do not place upon the walls of your schoolroom advertisements of tobacco, or other pictures representing objects with which the children should not become familiar.

Be very careful to have your statement of facts correct. If you are giving information in history, geography, or upon any subject, be sure that what you state is true.

I am very sorry to have to say that some teachers were found who gave evidence of being so slow in doing their work, and so heedless of what was required of them, as to be unprepared for their exercises when their schools were visited. It was manifest that they had not been doing work of any value, and had nothing of interest to exhibit. There were so many evidences of laziness and shiftlessness in these schools as to make the visits very disagreeable. It is hoped that during the next season there will be a marked improvement in these schools.

It is suggested that you place upon the board lists of words, and have the children point to the object which the word names or describes, or represent the action of which it is capable, or what may be done to or with it. I would then have the words put in sentences, but do not have them short or meaningless. Have them use such sentences as will tell something about some person, event, or object. If you use the word *largest* the pupils may say, "Aroostook county is the largest county in the State." If you call for a proper noun, they may reply that, "Hannibal Hamlin, of Maine, was vice-president of the United States in 1861." Do not allow different children to use the same sentence and do not allow them to use the same kind of sentences in giving examples. Introduce some variety into these exercises, and require the children to give such sentences as will express some information of value.

In giving general exercises, I would suggest that you make use of the work in geography, history, physiology, plants, rocks, quotations, complete selections, and that you make a special study of your own town, county, State and Nation. I consider it desirable that the children know something about persons of distinction who have lived in Maine and New England, and also have some knowledge of what they have done that is of importance.

In all the work of the school the teacher should have a carefully prepared outline of what she proposes to do, the order in which it shall be taken up, and the results which she hopes to attain. This cannot be done unless the teacher makes a careful study of each lesson and the whole subject, and has a clear idea of what the children can do and what they should do.

It is of vital importance that the children be made to feel that they are responsible for attending school regularly, applying themselves industriously to their work, and mastering thoroughly the lessons assigned them. I hope you will be able to impress your children with the fact that if they are to do anything in this world, become anything as men and women, they must study, think and work.

I was greatly pleased to notice that much had been done in the direction of making the schoolrooms more attractive. I was gratified to see the grass and bushes cut and removed from the school yards, the schoolrooms clean, and the walls and ceilings decorated with leaves, flowers, plants, pictures, maps and other materials. I believe this work is of great value, and I hope you will continue it in the future.

During my next visit I hope you will be prepared to give brief reviews of the important topics of the subjects your children are studying. In these

reviews have your questions short and definite, and insist that the answers of the children be correct and concise. As a rule do not ask questions which can be answered by yes or no, nor in such a way as to indicate the answer. Do not answer questions for the children. Do not repeat the answers which they give. Do not allow pupils to guess at the answers. Have clearly in mind the precise topics you are to consider, the order in which they are to be taken, and how much you are to take in connection with each. Then, have your questions so framed that these points will be covered, and the children will be able to show by their answers whether they are familiar with the subject or not.

I would suggest that while pupils are doing work in arithmetic on their slates or the black-board, you have other classes recite in other subjects; the purpose of this plan being to crowd as much work as possible into the time I am in the school. It is important that those who are reciting give the strictest attention to the work they are doing, and that those in their seats devote themselves to their studies.

I would suggest that you have a program of what you are to do, and that as soon as I enter the room you commence upon this work and go through with your exercises without waiting for me to call for any given subject, or dictate to you what you shall do; in a word, my wish is that you be prepared to take up the work promptly when I enter the room, go through with it regularly, and give me a chance to judge what you have done, by conducting your exercises in your own way. If I wish for special subjects, or if I wish you to omit the work you have prepared, I will state what my desire is; otherwise, you are to proceed with the lessons as arranged. Do not spend time in telling me what you have done, what you have not done, or what you are going to do, but proceed at once with the exercises. In conducting a recitation do not have different pupils answer the same question. When a question has been asked, and answered, that is quite sufficient for any given topic.

While I shall not be able to hear reviews in all the subjects studied in any given school, yet it will be necessary to be prepared in all of them, as I shall decide upon those I wish to hear after entering the schoolroom. These reviews should include reading, spelling, arithmetic, geography, history, language and grammar, physiology, general exercises, quotations, selections, singing and physical exercises. I hope you will have your specimens of written work and drawing ready so I can examine them during the time you are conducting the class exercises.

I was exceedingly pleased with the specimens of work from the several schools which were exhibited at the teachers' meeting held in Fort Kent last September. I hope you will do as much of this work during the coming season as your time and opportunities will permit. Photographs were made of the exhibit last year and the same will be done of the material prepared during the coming year. These photographs are to be used in the next Report, to illustrate the work your school has done. You will remember that there were placed on exhibition specimens of work in penmanship, drawing, including reproduction of pictures, miniature specimens of the different utensils and implements used in the home and upon the



AN AVERAGE SCHOOLHOUSE—N. E. MAINE.



ONE OF THE BEST SCHOOLHOUSES—N. E. MAINE.

farm, canes, rulers, knives, forks, dishes, harrows, plows, rollers, sleighs, easels, charts and stands, and many useful and ornamental articles. There were also many very creditable samples of work in history, arithmetic, geography, grammar, spelling, civil government, composition, and a number of globes, charts and other specimens of apparatus and appliances. I trust you will make a special effort to have the exhibit this year a great improvement over the one made last year.

I think you will find common manilla paper very useful for maps, sketches and charts of all kinds.

I was much pleased with the singing in many of the schools last year. When I visit your school the next time I hope your children will be able to sing the American and French national songs. I will suggest again that you be careful that they sing in smooth, clear, pleasant tones, and not in that shrill, harsh key which is so disagreeable to those who have to listen.

If you have made a study of your work, you realize that there is a great difference between *teaching* school and *keeping* school. To *teach* school, one must have such a knowledge of the subjects which she teaches as will enable her to direct the children in their work, and stimulate them to acquire a mastery of the subjects they study. To *keep* school one needs simply to be able to read the questions printed in the book and listen to the answers. This last form of work is of no value to the teacher, and is a serious injury to the children.

I think it is important that you visit and make a careful study of the best schools in your vicinity. When you visit these schools observe the conduct of the children in the yard, as they enter and leave the room, and while the school is in session. Notice the order of exercises, how each subject is taught, what general work is done, and the methods and devices used to make the work interesting and helpful.

I hope you will exchange questions in general exercises, and in history, geography, physiology, nature study, etc., etc., with teachers who are doing the same lines of work. By making these exchanges you will get many points that will be of special service to you, and the children you are teaching. I would suggest that you exchange books on teaching, and also educational papers with teachers with whom you are acquainted. By pursuing this plan, you will be able to read a number of works of value with but small expense to yourself. One of the best things a teacher can do to fit herself for her work is to study out methods of her own, and then be willing to explain them to others as she may have opportunity. Such explanations will make them clear to herself, and possibly they may be of service to others. Let me urge you to be ready at all times to visit and study schools, to exchange topics, books and papers with your associates.

It is impossible for a teacher to do good work in a school unless she have an accurate knowledge of the subjects she is to teach, be familiar with the best methods of giving instruction in these branches, and have some definite plan for conducting all her exercises.



It is necessary for me to call your attention to the following extracts from the statutes of Maine.

"No teacher shall be employed in any school, receiving the benefit of the Madawaska Territory School Act, who is not able to speak and write the English language satisfactorily, and the English language shall be used in giving instruction and directing the discipline of the same." Also, "The State Superintendent shall prescribe the studies to be taught in the common schools of this State."

By virtue of the power granted me by the statutes quoted, I prescribe that the studies enumerated in the School Laws of Maine shall be taught in your schools. To do this work as the law intends it shall be done, will require the entire time of the school sessions, i. e. from 9 A. M. to 12 M., and from 1 to 4 P. M. It is clearly stated in the above extract that the instruction and discipline of the schools must be given in the English language. If this work is faithfully done your children will, in a short time, be able to read, write and speak the English language fluently. When I visit your schools next fall I shall be able to decide if you are complying with the requirements of the law cited above.

These statements do not debar you from giving instruction in another language, if your superintendent wishes you to do so. It does not prevent you from giving instruction in other subjects outside of school hours, if you are willing to do so. But I must insist that, during school hours, the work of the schools shall be confined to teaching the subjects specified in the law.

I feel that this is a matter of importance; therefore, do not fail to have all the conversation of the school both on the part of the teacher and the pupils carried on in English; and also have all the instruction, and all explanations, directions and commands given in this language.

A failure to do this will endanger the fund which your town draws from the State. It must be clear to you that there are important reasons for your being very careful to live up to the letter and spirit of the statute.

I realize that I am outlining a large amount of work for you for this spring and summer, but if you do a little each day, you will find before the year is closed, the work has already been done.

It is but fair to state that your schools will be examined, this year, along the lines indicated in this circular. I hope it will be possible for me, at the close of my summer tour through your section of the State, to recommend the re-employment of all the teachers whose schools I visit.

I wish you the hearty co-operation of the parents of your pupils, and a very pleasant and successful year's school.

INSTRUCTION IN ENGLISH

The second object of my present visit to your section was to make careful and thorough inspection of the schools, in order to ascertain the extent to which the teachers were following the suggestions of the circular, and to observe the results of such practice. To make this inspection correct, it was necessary for me to create a deeper and



EXHIBIT OF WORK DONE IN THE RURAL SCHOOLS—N. E. MAINE.

more general educational interest among the people, it was not conducted alone nor made the sole object of the visit to any section. School officers and people were invited to be present at as many of these visits as practicable. And to add still more to its force in this direction, His Excellency, the Governor, was prevailed upon to make a tour of the territory, join in visiting some of the schools, and meet the people both socially and formally.

This visit of the Governor will prove of great good to this people in every way. His genial and democratic manners won their confidence and regard. The deep and intelligent interest in their educational, material and civic affairs which he manifested on all occasions, both social and formal, can but prove an inspiration to better things. No tour that he has made or may make to other sections of the State, will produce more or better results than this.

The scope and thoroughness of this inspection are indicated by the following copy of the notes made during a visit to one of these schools:

"Room 7 by 17 by 18 feet; floor, one thickness of rough boards; ceiling, the roof, walls, the siding and frame of building. Cook-stove used for heating room; desks, horizontal boards fastened to upright pieces of board with a piece at the front about the width of the top piece; seats, straight pieces of board on inch boards for standards; no backs to seats. Building located near a small stream and at some distance from the road; formerly used as a dwelling house.

"Pupils read fluently in French and English. Translate from one language to another; name objects in both languages, tell how they are produced, used, or what they can do. Pupils are clean, bright, wholesome looking; dressed neatly and becomingly. Manners, courteous and easy.

Excellent compositions. Prompt and accurate recitations. Gave creditable exercises in physical culture. Sing well both French and English songs. Drawing shows skill and taste. Colored maps, charts and mottoes, made by children. Mottoes consist of the words "Reform." "Charity Begins at Home." "Speak the Truth." "Union." "Be True." These mottoes made by the children on card-board, beautifully colored and ornamented. Had on exhibition implements of the farm and utensils of the household, made by children. Room attractively decorated with leaves, flowers, maps, drawings and pictures. Decorations prepared and arranged by pupils under direction of teacher.

"Creditable exercises in language, arithmetic and reading. Methods employed by the teacher are such as would be used by our best teachers in cities.

"In the dictation exercises the capital letters, and punctuation marks are correctly used. Words spelled correctly and penmanship excellent. Used compound words, compound, complex and simple sentences in the dictation exercises. But two errors noted in the work put upon the board by the children; both of these corrected when the child was asked if there was an error in the sentence where the error was found. Exercises also given in geography, grammar and history. Thirty-five pupils enrolled; thirty-two present."

When the present educational condition of this section is compared with that existing three years ago it is clear that substantial gains have been made. The parents have a more general, more active and more intelligent interest in the schools. They realize more fully than ever before that the children must attend school regularly and apply themselves persistently to be benefited by their work. The children are disposed to devote themselves more faithfully to their studies, and hence show a greater interest in their lessons. They have more respect for the school, its teacher, and for authority generally. The teachers are more devoted to their work, have a more intelligent conception of its ends, and more skill in the use of right means for securing those ends. These changes have resulted in an increase in the number enrolled and the average attendance.

In calling and dismissing classes a marked improvement is noted. In many schools when the signal is given, the children rise in their places, face in the direction they are to march, keep step as they are passing to their places, face the teacher and visitor, and bow simultaneously at a given signal. All of these things are done promptly, quietly and gracefully, showing what is the regular practice of the school. It is easy for one to discover when things are done for the occasion. The children are embarrassed, the teacher is self-conscious, and many awkward incidents occur which reveal that the visitor is not seeing the school in its every day dress and work.

Perhaps the one point in which the teachers showed the most marked improvement was the dispatch with which they conducted the exercises. The classes were called, questions were asked, answers were given in a way which indicated that the teacher had arranged in her own mind a place at which to begin, the line of work she proposed to pursue, and a point she expected to reach. The children had developed that capacity of attention from this method of doing work which held them to the subject that was being treated, and relieved them from the embarrassment they would naturally feel at reciting in the presence of strangers. The teacher and pupils seemed to have but one object, and that was to attend to the business in hand. They were so absorbed in this that they forgot their surroundings, and hence acquitted themselves with great credit. The color in the face, the brightness in the eye and the alertness in the poise, all indicated that they were aroused by the subject they were considering and were devoted to their work. The teachers showed skill in conducting a recitation while at the same time they were having pupils put work in language, or geography, or history, or arithmetic on the board, thus saving the time of the school as well as that of the visitors. The most of the teachers did not use the text-books in conducting regular recitations, or the reviews, or special exercises.

As soon as the visitors entered the room, the teacher proceeded at once to carry out the instructions previously given. Classes were called and recitations were conducted in reading, spelling, geography, history, language, singing, physical culture, both oral and written arithmetic, quotations, recitations of selections and general questions on the town,

county, State, noted men in New England, particularly in Maine, and special exercises in the geography of Maine, and physiology and hygiene. During the progress of these exercises visitors had an opportunity to examine the charts, maps, sketches and other decorations found upon the walls, and in some cases even upon the ceilings. Some schoolrooms were entirely covered with autumn leaves and evergreens, and the maps, charts and drawings of the pupils, making the rooms not only unusually attractive but placing the work done by the children in such a form that it could be easily inspected and estimated.

It was peculiarly gratifying to those who were inspecting the schools to notice not only the promptness with which the teacher began her work, the regularity with which it was carried on, but also the judgment with which the essential points were selected in any given study, and the fairness and impartiality with which questions were assigned pupils. The teacher commenced with no particular student, proceeded in no special order, and if a failure was made, other pupils were prompt in making the necessary corrections. While it was evident that the work given was in the form of a review, still it was presented in such a way as to place its fairness beyond question. In subjects like geography, history, language and arithmetic, the teacher usually began with the first principles and proceeded in a regular order to the point to which the pupils had advanced. Usually she did not have a set form of questions, often varied the wording when the point was not clearly understood, and showed great skill in so framing the question that the pupil would receive no hint of the answer expected, but left him free to tell what he knew and express his judgment and knowledge in his own words. With a few exceptions questions could not be answered by yes or no, and the emphasis and inflection did not aid the child in his answers. The visitors tested the pupils in their work by asking questions from the texts used, and giving the children an opportunity to express independent opinions on the subjects upon which they had recited. The test in their ability to use English was more searching than in any other subject. The children were asked to name many of the objects in sight, describe them, tell how they were produced or manufactured and state the uses to which they might be put, and how they might be changed, etc. In these exercises children were led to state their names and ages, locate their homes, describe the country in the vicinity of the school and give an intelligent description of the garments they wore, the food they eat and the occupations in which they engaged. These tests were for the purpose of ascertaining if the directions in regard to conducting the instruction, management and discipline in English, had been faithfully carried out. In a majority of the schools the results attained were satisfactory. In a few schools it was necessary to indicate to the teachers that changes must be made, or it would be necessary to make changes in the teaching force. All classes of people seemed to have a genuine interest in having the children instructed in English in such a way that they could write and speak the English language intelligently and fluently. An unusually intelligent French woman said: "It is necessary for us to master the English language or starve."



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The pupils were able to recite complete selections in both French and English. These selections were taken from the best French and the modern English authors. The English selections included such pieces as "The Psalm of Life," "The Bridge," "The Day is Done," "Eternal Goodness," "The River Path," "Crossing the Bar," "The Bells," etc. They were also able to render in both French and English the popular and patriotic songs of both nations. A large number of children could sing "America," "Columbia, The Gem of the Ocean," "The Star Spangled Banner," "The Red, White and Blue," "Marching Through Georgia," etc.

It was noticed that a marked improvement had been made in the matter of adding columns of figures rapidly and accurately. The visitor would step to the board, write a column of figures from top to bottom and the children could add as rapidly as the pointer indicated the figures. Samples were shown of the work the children had done in writing sketches of persons, places, things, events, and also specimens of their penmanship and samples of their work in business and conventional forms. Much of this work was done with neatness and accuracy. Many of the letters written by the children were correct in form, and showed a creditable knowledge of the use of capitals. Lists of words were placed upon the board, and children were drilled in pronouncing the words, giving the sounds of which they were composed, putting the words into sentences, and then substituting a word of the same meaning for the word given.

The children are coming to have a better idea of why they are in school and the necessity for doing their own work. These changes have bred in the children a sense of responsibility, a desire to do, and an ambition to master their lessons. In giving sketches of Lincoln, Grant, Longfellow, Whittier and others, it was noticed that the children seemed to be familiar with enough facts relating to these men to give them intelligent ideas of their character, quality and life. The work in anatomy and physiology showed a fair knowledge of the structure of the human body, its functions and the care which should be given to its development and protection. In a number of schools the children had an intelligent idea of the civil government of the town and State, and also knew something of the physical features, resources, productions and industries of the town, county and State. It was astonishing to see the great service that common manilla paper served when placed in the hands of an intelligent teacher. The value of the maps, charts, etc., which were made from this inexpensive material can hardly be overestimated.

Work in manual training was undertaken three years ago. As has already been indicated, many of the parents can neither read nor write. A considerable number of the homes are log cabins or houses of primitive construction, some of them being sheathed, others have frame walls covered with paper, and some of them are plastered. The utensils and implements in the home and on the farm are of the simplest construction, and many of them are provided by the efforts of the people who use them. The apparatus in the schools is mostly made by the teachers and pupils. The tools used by the children in making the material placed on exhibi-

tion in their schoolrooms, and later in the teachers' meetings, were of small number and primitive make. Occasionally a child had an opportunity to see a plane, but the most of them were limited to a saw, jack-knife, hammer, bits of iron, pieces of wood and a few nails. The teachers usually give a part of Friday afternoon of each week to directions and instruction in the manufacture of articles upon which the children were working. With these simple materials and insufficient tools they were able to construct looms, spinning wheels, sleds, harrows, plows, racks, shovels, axes, charts, maps, easels, picture frames, miniature houses, mats, rugs, quilts, spreads, embroidery, sleighs, wagons, balances, a complete blacksmith shop including bellows, tools and anvil; in fact, all the different implements and utensils found on the farm and in the home, and apparatus seen in the school. In another section of this Report will be found reproductions of photographs of as much of this material as could be represented in this way. One familiar with this work can easily understand how imperfectly the extent and quality of the exhibits can be represented, particularly in penmanship, drawing and kindred subjects.

Over eighty-five per cent of the schools were provided with flags. At several schools banners, emblems and flags of various kinds were displayed. It was evident that a special effort had been made to put the yards in an attractive condition by the removal of rocks, rubbish, bushes, grass, etc. In many instances something had been done in the direction of grading the grounds, and in most cases trees and cultivated flowers had been planted. Not a room was visited without finding either wild or cultivated flowers in pots or vases. The use which was made of autumn leaves, evergreens and plants, did great credit to teachers and pupils. The charts included work in language, phonics, number, civil government and history. The maps included those of the towns, county, State, United States and different countries of the world. The pictures found in the papers and magazines to which the teachers and pupils had access, were used for decorating the schoolrooms; many of them were mounted upon card-board, and a considerable number were provided with frames furnished by the skillful hands of the children.

These children have the advantage of many pupils in other parts of the State in that they have an opportunity to be instructed in two languages. They are taught to read, write and speak both English and French. The regular work of the school is conducted in the English language. French is taught the same as any other subject. As the French language is used almost exclusively in the homes, and the English language is used in the schools, the children have opportunities of becoming familiar with both. The tendency is for the children to use the French language on the street, at their play and in their homes; hence they do not acquire the same facility in the use of the English that they possess in the use of their mother tongue. But substantial gains are being made, and it is believed that in a few years the majority of the people will use both languages with equal facility. It is a great advantage to one to be familiar with two languages, have such knowledge of them that he can use their idioms

understandingly, and gain the rare skill which comes from such knowledge and training. The force of what one says depends largely upon the aptness with which he expresses himself. The accurate knowledge of words which comes from the study of their form and meaning in several languages gives one possessing this knowledge great power over one who is destitute of it. While it will not be possible for the English speaking children in other sections of the State to be instructed in two languages in the common schools for many years to come, it cannot be considered otherwise than fortunate that some of our people are to have the advantages which come from such instruction.

These children are distinguished for ease and grace of movement, knowledge and observance of conventional forms, and smooth, pleasant tones. When a visitor enters the room, they rise in their places and bow to him respectfully and gracefully, and remain standing until he indicates they may be seated. If they have occasion to address him, or present him with any object, or pass in front of him, or in any way come in contact with him, they know the proper forms and in their use of them they have that grace and ease which comes from a knowledge of the usages of good society. It is peculiarly gratifying to note their thoughtfulness, considerateness and courtesy. These things seem to be both instinctive and acquired; instinctive in that they do them without previous consideration, and acquired in that they do them with so much grace. As a rule they are skillful in their work in drawing, whether of maps or charts or representations of objects, and they read with fluency and expression. Their penmanship is smooth, round and legible. They seem to acquire early the ability to form letters with precision. They have good powers of description, and to the extent of their familiarity with the language in which they speak, they express themselves with force and appropriateness. They are ambitious to excel, grateful for recognition, and fairly faithful in devotion to their work.

A large proportion of the teachers are taking one or more educational journals, and it was evident from the character of the work done that these papers were studied, and that many of their suggestions and devices were used in the schoolroom. A considerable number of the teachers have purchased and are studying works on pedagogy, and the improvement in the instruction given shows that they have benefited by this reading. Over ninety-five per cent of them attended the teachers' meetings which were held in this section. They presented class exercises, read papers, participated in the discussions and took notes of things they observed and heard. The class exercises given in physical culture, language, arithmetic, geography, music and general exercises, were of a character to be a credit to any body of teachers. They showed a knowledge of modern methods, an intelligent adaptation of them to local conditions, and excellent judgment in the selection of materials used and subjects considered. An increasing number of them are visiting the schools of the best teachers and are making careful note of methods, devices, etc., which are used by those who are recognized as leading teach-



ers. They are also exchanging topics and questions, papers and books, and carrying on correspondence upon school matters.

EVIDENCE OF RESULTS.

As further and more definite evidence of the kind, scope and excellence of the work done in these schools, specimens of composition work in English and penmanship were collected; and teachers were requested to make lists of questions covering more or less completely the work done in the common school studies, of the songs, both English and French, sung, and of the selections recited by the pupils as practice exercises in English. A large amount of material was thus collected. Average specimens of the compositions, and lists of the selections recited and songs sung, are here given. The compositions presented are selected because prepared in one of the smaller schools, and because of the unfavorable surroundings in which they were written. They are given with the mistakes and shortcomings found in the original papers. The illustrations found in this volume fairly represent the work done in manual training.

COMPOSITIONS.

SCHOOL.

It is very useful for boys and girls to go to school. Some do not like it but I like to go to school very well. The school is not at the same place as last year. Last summer we were in one part of our old kitchen. It was very small and lonesome. We had only some flowers in the school but none round it. But this year we have this little house all to ourselves and have flowers in it and all round it. We have the teacher we had last summer. She is a very good teacher and I like her very much.

At school we draw maps and pictures. We also learn to read and write and talk English and many other lessons. Next summer we will have a new schoolhouse on the big sandy hill. It is a nice place and we will have a nice playground and we will have a better chance to plant our flowers.

TAME CROW.

Sometime in the month of June I went into the woods and found in the top of a spruce tree four little crows ready to fly. I took them all off the nest put them in my hat and took them home. I did not keep them all. the mother crow came to get one, one morning and I gave two to some other boys and I kept the other one. I kept it for a long time and it became very tame. I named it Jark and every time I called her name she would come to me and eat from my hand. She would follow me everywhere, she would go in the fields and come back with me. She would not mind the other crows but one morning, I am sorry to say, she flew to the barn of a neighbor for a little chicken and the man shot her.

LIST OF FRENCH AND ENGLISH SONGS.

America. Our Country. Flag of the Free. A Song For Our Banner. The Hunter on the Hill. Leaving Port. The Sower. Chiming Bells. Oh Bright Merry Smiles. Old Folks At Home. Angel Hours. Whom Shall We Let In. Summer. The Merry Spring-time. Sweet Summer's Gone Away. Welcome Friends. Our Public Schools. Now The Bells Are Ringing. Marching Through Georgia. Home Sweet Home. The Merry Heart. Christmas Carol. Greeting Glee. Live For Something. The Battle Hymn of the Republic. Swinging 'neath The Old Apple Tree. Bon Soir, Mes Amis. Les Bons Hurom. A La Claire Fontaine. En Roulant Ma Boule. Ma Normandie. La Prière Du Chatelain. La Patrie. Le Canadian Errant. Language Des Fleurs. La Petit Mousse. La Fille Du Pêcheur. L'enfant. Le Soldat. L'oiseau De France. La Prière. L'Orpheline. Les Enfants Perdus. L'Espérance. Madawaska. Le Départ.

LIST OF SELECTIONS FOR DECLAMATIONS.

A Vacation Acrostic. Rest of the Flowers. Meaning of the Colors. Flowers and Needs. Daisies. Cover them Over with Flowers. Who can Ring the Bell? The Old Oaken Bucket. Love of Country. I'm a Big Boy. Work While You Work. Nothing Like Water. Do Your Best. Guess What I Got in my Pocket. Robin Redbreast. I Would not Be a Girl. I Would not Be a Boy. Love Each Other. Little Things. Home Picture. Pussy Cat. What Birdie Says. The Cunning Old Cat. Mother's Wish. Merry Spring. Old Ironsides. The Land of Liberty. Beautiful Hands. School Days. Independence Bell. Our Flag. The Miller of the Dee. Birds in Summer. Looking for the Fairies. The Old Mill. The Dolls. Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star. All Things Bright and Beautiful. A Wish. The Landing of the Pilgrims. Our Country. The Noblest Men. Work. Two Pictures. In the Brave Days of Old. Daybreak. The Song of Steam. A Farewell. Little by Little. A Summer Day. Summer and Winter. We Reap as We Sow. The Sword and the Pen. A Safe Rule of Conduct. Sweet Love. Beware. Be Polite. Ma, Muller. Barefoot Boy. Evangeline. Psalm of Life. The Village Blacksmith. Something Left Undone. Speak Gently. Lincoln's Address at Gettysburg. Forty Years Ago. One by One. Not Words Alone. The Bridge. The Bells. Crossing the Bar. The River Path. Eternal Goodness.

CHANGES AND THEIR CAUSES.

The change which has taken place in the sentiment of this people, is fairly indicated by the remark of an old farmer who said: "The best teachers are not too good for us, although he said it in broken English difficult to repeat. Their desire to improve their teaching force is



EXHIBIT OF WORK DONE IN THE RURAL SCHOOLS—N. E. MAINE.

also shown by the fact that one superintendent, who heard a certain teacher commended for her success in the schoolroom, said: "I will have her next term if I have to double her pay." Another farmer, somewhat advanced in years, gave expression to the following astonishing statements. He said he would have a school lot of, at least, three acres in area; he would have a certain portion of it devoted to flowers, another section to fruits and vegetables, another section to trees and shrubs, and he would have the children carefully instructed in planting and caring for these areas. He even went so far as to say that he would have cooking taught in the common schools. And these opinions were expressed by a man who had never enjoyed the advantages which would come from such conditions.

The work of improving these schools has been conducted along several well defined lines and through the agency of various forces. Carefully prepared circulars have been sent to the school officials, instructing them in regard to their duties and powers. Similar documents have been sent to the teachers, giving detailed directions as to the branches to be taught, the subjects to be emphasized, the methods to be used and the results which would be expected. The schools have been visited and inspected for the purpose of ascertaining what had been done, and making suggestions as to changes in subjects taught and methods used. Teachers' meetings have been held for the purpose of giving an opportunity for the most successful teachers to present class exercises showing what topics are taught, what methods are employed in conducting the recitations, and what results may be attained. Public meetings have been held at which the parents have been addressed as to what improvements should be made in school yards and school-buildings, what their duties are in supporting the teacher and sending their children to school regularly, and the different ways in which they can aid the teacher in her work and make the school more useful to their children.

The circulars issued have been sent to the clergymen of these towns, and by them have been brought before the parents, teachers and children in such a way as to give them a full understanding of the instructions which they contained. They have voluntarily read them to their people both in French and English and explained their meaning with a faithfulness that has borne great results. They have shown in a marked way their sympathy with the reforms which have been inaugurated and their desire to make them useful to their people. The parents and children have been instructed by their spiritual advisers as to what their duties are in the matter of attendance, conduct, obedience, and studiousness. They have been told in terms which it was easy for them to understand that it was for their interest as well as their moral duty to follow the instructions given and make the largest possible use of the schools which are provided. Directions have been given as to the care of school yards and school-buildings and a more intelligent and economical expenditure of school funds. They have done all it seemed possible for them to do to make the work attempted successful and useful. The support which has been thus given has been largely instrumental in effecting the changes

which have taken place. Whole communities have been aroused to the importance of school work and the necessity of having better schools. The results have been seen in the efforts which the teachers have made to improve themselves, the disposition which is manifested to employ the best teachers and continue them for a considerable length of time in the same school, the support which has been accorded teachers who are doing faithful work, the gain which has been made in the average attendance, and the improvement that is shown in the extent and quality of the work done. These pastors are entitled to the most cordial approbation of all lovers of the common schools for their interest in them and efforts to improve them.

ONE MAN'S WORK.

Reference has already been made to the influence of the Training School as one of the forces promotive of educational progress among this people. This influence has not been exerted through the teachers alone who have gone from it into the common schools. The fact of its existence has been a constantly acting force. That such a school was accessible to the poorest boy or girl in the territory who would prepare in the common schools for admission to it, has aroused the ambition of the children, and their parents for them, for something more than the home school could give, and has, at the same time, compelled the home school to do better work. In nearly every section of the territory there are homes made by those who have been graduated from it, and those homes are centers of educational interest and sources of educational influence. It is not too much to say that the influence emanating from the Training School in these indirect ways, has been only second in force to that exerted by it more directly through the teachers who have been graduated from it. But in a large sense this influence of the school was that of the man who from the beginning stood at its head, and whose untimely death is sincerely mourned. Probably no one personality has made itself felt, and always for good, in so many homes in every town in the territory as that of Mr. Vetal Cyr. His hearty cheerfulness, his kindliness of manner and his enthusiasm, were contagious; and not less so was his interest in the schools everywhere and in the children in the schools. His manner and voice inspired confidence. In his vacation tours through the territory, whether alone or with the State Superintendent on his annual tour of inspection, his visits to the schools carried cheer and courage to teacher and pupils alike. His cordial, cheery greeting with happy phase of introduction, would put at ease the diffident, trembling teacher, dreading the coming of the strange visitor, and give her a self-command which would otherwise have been lacking and have rendered the visit a torture to her and the inspection of her school valueless so far as giving any definite and just idea of its real condition. Such a man at the head of such an institution, could not fail to be a force for good. How great a force he was will never be fully realized save by the few who knew him and his work thoroughly and had his fullest confidence.



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To one thus knowing him and his work, Mr. Cyr seemed almost to have been born to that work, and trained for it by all the circumstances of his early life. That he was of an old Acadian stock with offshoots in every section of the territory, was fortunate for the work which it was his to do; for kinship however distant counts for more among this people than among the colder Anglo-Saxon race. That he was born neither to wealth nor abject poverty, but to the necessity for and the discipline of toil, was fortunate, because it gave him the power to sympathize with and appreciate the life conditions of the great mass of his pupils, and to know from experience what it cost them and their parents in toil and sacrifice to acquire an education. It was fortunate that his childhood's home was fixed at Fort Kent, the one locality in all the territory where the English language was spoken by any considerable number of people, and where from the beginning schools had been maintained. It was fortunate that, when he had grown in knowledge up to the limits of the work of the home school, and had sought further education at Houlton Academy, he found a friend in that broad minded, cultured gentleman, the late Mr. J. C. Madigan, and a home in his family; and it was equally fortunate that in the principal of the Academy, now the distinguished Entomologist of the Massachusetts Agricultural College, he came under the influence of a man whose enthusiasm was contagious, who fired and intensified his growing love for learning, and who got such a hold upon his confidence and affection as led the student to follow the master when he was called to a professorship in the young and growing State College at Orono. And, finally, it was fortunate that the young Frenchman's command of both spoken and written English had become such that employment in some of the largest and best of the rural schools in the State was open to him. In teaching these and mingling with the people he had to deal with problems, the study of which fitted him to organize wisely, build firmly, and direct efficiently the work and influence of the school in which his life work was to be done. And it was while so teaching he came to be known and appreciated by the two men, Messrs. Corthell and Luce, the one of whom was to set him finally to his work, and the other to stand behind him in it almost to the last.

Such was the preparation of the man who was selected to take charge of the Madawaska Training School. Indeed, it is not certain the school would have been established when and as it was, had not those who conceived the idea of it, seen in him the one man fitted by birth, race, training and personality to make it a success from the start.

The good he wrought will live after him in the larger, better and more fruitful lives of those who have been under his instruction. The influence he exerted has become a permanent force for good. And while we can but feel that his work was too soon ended, that there was in him the power for further, larger usefulness, that there is needed still in the school and among the people the inspiration of his enthusiasm, the directive force of his intelligence, the influence of his wise advice, and the example of his manliness, we must yet feel that he was happy in his death and is fortunate in his last resting place.



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Before he went he saw the school which was the center of his thought and affection, and which had stood to him in place of wife and children, attractively housed and furnished, and grown to a lusty strength far beyond his earlier anticipations. His work was crowned with the hearty approval and commendation of the highest educational and civic authorities of the State. He was loved and honored by hosts of friends, young and old, and was the recipient of tokens of their loving thought and sympathy in his illness. What more of real success could human ambition ask as the crown of life? And then

"God's finger touched him, and he slept."

He rests at last as he must have wished to rest, within the consecrated grounds of the church he loved and honored, beside the beautiful river whose murmuring music had lulled him to sleep in childhood. And sleeping thus, it takes no stretch of fancy to believe that though dead he yet lives and shall live as an influence for good; that the memory of what he was and what he wrought will touch, as his personality did, the lives of men, and win them to higher aims and better issues.

**A Study
of the Needs
of the Schools
of Maine.**

**By the State
Superintendent
of Public Schools
1899.**

SOME NEEDS OF THE SCHOOLS.

Any careful study of the condition of the schools of Maine makes clear the following needs:

Better physical surroundings for the school children.

More complete and competent supervision.

Better equipped teachers.

More intelligent arrangement and thorough mastery of the subjects studied.

Better instruction in manners, morals, economy and citizenship.

Higher literary and art ideals.

PHYSICAL SURROUNDINGS.

Children are influenced more by their physical surroundings than is realized by persons who have not made careful studies in this matter. The location of the school yard, the scenery which surrounds it, the condition of the yard itself, the location and quality of the school buildings, are matters which should receive special attention, because of the influence they exert for good or evil upon the children who use them. The school lot should overlook interesting and attractive surroundings. It should be of such size as will give proper seclusion to the school. The community using the grounds should interest itself in the proper grading of the lot and the planting of such trees, shrubbery and flowers as will give it a homelike and attractive appearance. The buildings should be so located as to permit both teachers and pupils to do their work under the most favorable conditions and inflict upon them the least annoyance.

The details relating to the size of school lots and preparation of the same, the location, construction and furnishing of outhouses and school buildings are discussed in Appendix I of the Report of 1897, and to those pages persons interested in this matter are referred. They are also referred to the schoolhouses in their immediate vicinity, and the Report of 1895 of this department for information concerning the present condition of the school property of the State. It is believed that a careful study of the facts will result in great improvements in these matters. Such improvements should not stop short of the attainment of the following briefly outlined conditions:

1. The school lot should be at least one acre in area, with a frontage of not less than 180 feet, and the school building should not be within 100 feet of the street or road. The lot should be graded and adorned with plants and trees.

2. Every possible precaution should be used to prevent contaminating matter of any kind from reaching the water supply of the school.

3. Separate outhouses should be provided for the boys and girls. They should be as far apart as the limits of the lot will permit, and separated from each other by a high board fence.

4. The brick walls upon which the building rests should be, at least, three feet six inches above the level of the ground. The building should face the south. The windows should be at the left and rear of the children when seated. They should extend to within six inches of the ceiling, and the window sills should be, at least, as high as the eyes of the children when seated. There should be no windows in the wall which the children face when at their desks.

5. The interior colors of the school room should be so arranged that the floor will be the darkest part of the room, the wainscoting lighter than the floor, the walls lighter than the wainscoting, and the ceiling the lightest portion of the room. The ceiling should be pure white or light cream. The walls may be light drab, cream color, light gray, light bluish gray, or light greenish yellow.

6. Schoolrooms should be from two-thirds to three-fourths as wide as they are long. The height should not exceed fourteen feet, nor be less than eleven feet. Each child should have, at least, twenty square feet of floor space, and two hundred and forty cubic feet of air space.

7. Blackboards should not be less than three feet six inches wide. In primary grades the lower edge of the board should be about two feet from the floor, and in other grades about three feet.

8. Desks should be so formed as to allow the children to rest their feet squarely upon the floor when seated, and should fit comfortably the form of the body. For primary grades the edge of the desk next to and in front of the child should be nine inches from the back of the seat in which he is seated. This distance should be ten inches in intermediate grades, eleven inches in grammar grades, and twelve inches in high school grades.

9. The ventilation of the room should be such as to take from the room the impure air and supply the exhaust with warm, pure air. The doors and windows should be thrown wide open fifteen minutes before the morning session, not less than fifteen minutes during the noon intermission, and a half hour after the close of school at night. The doors and windows should always be open during recess periods.

TEACHERS.

The teacher of the public school of the future must have a mastery of the principles and facts which she will be required to teach; must have such knowledge of nature as will enable her to interest children in its study and direct them in their work; must have such love for literature as will make it easy for her to assist the children in forming a taste for good books and guide them in their reading; and must have such appreciation of art as will render her a safe counsellor in planning school grounds, tinting schoolrooms, and selecting works of art for her school. She must possess that peculiar power which will make it easy for her to inspire in children a love for work, and a desire to know because of the power which the acquiring of knowledge gives. Her training must include the studies taught in the elementary and secondary schools, together with, at least, one year of study and practice in a professional school. Teachers, school officials and parents must insist upon these conditions as minimum prerequisites to a person's entering upon this field of labor. The State will fail in its efforts to provide the schools with efficient teachers so long as it permits the requirements for entering upon the work to remain at its present low standard.

The training of teachers is a financial as well as a moral question. If persons are to be considered fit to take charge of schools when they have but a meager preparation for their work, and if school officials are to place in the schools persons who are unfit for the duties they assume, then the money spent for the maintenance of schools will yield but a small return, and the children will fail of that training which will make them a moral and intellectual force in the world. The necessity for such an inquiry into the fitness of candidates to teach as will insure the exclusion of persons who are deficient in scholastic training is manifest to all. Every one who has an interest in an intelligent and economical expenditure of public funds has also an interest in the employment of competent teachers and such laws as will prevent selfish or incompetent officials from squandering the school funds on inefficient teachers. These are great questions which the people of Maine must meet, and the settlement of them will not come until they are settled right.

The general principles stated above will govern in the final adjustment of this phase of the school question in all communities. There may be differences of opinion as to the means to be used in accomplishing the ends here outlined, but there can be no question as to the results that are desirable. If the State would insist upon a reasonable preparation for the work on the part of those who are to be teachers in our schools, the local communities would be placed in a position where they could get a fair return for the money which they invest in this department of work. So long as the present hap-hazard system of mismanagement is in force, it is impossible to prevent the squandering of a considerable portion of the public school funds.

ARRANGEMENT AND MASTERY OF STUDIES.

Our courses of study indicate that their compilers have felt that the results of thinking are of greater value than the processes by which they are reached. The children are overloaded with too many and too great a variety of facts at one time. Self control, concentration, endurance and application are not yet recognized as being on as high an educational plane as the location of insignificant towns, unimportant dates and meaningless definitions. It is unfortunate that there does not exist in the minds of school officials, teachers or parents a well defined conception of what a common school should be. It is equally unfortunate that there is no accepted standard of what it should do. The schools designated as elementary schools should have a clearly defined purpose. Their work should be limited to certain subjects, and the extent of the mastery of these branches should be definitely known.

When a child is prepared to enter a secondary school he should be able to write a legible hand, and spell and give the meanings of the words he will use in a spoken or written form. In arithmetic he should have a mastery of the four fundamental rules, common and decimal fractions, the common applications of denominate numbers and the simple applications of percentage, and should be able to apply these principles to concrete examples that come into his daily experience. He should be familiar with the structure of the English sentence, be able to determine whether it is correct or otherwise, and apply this knowledge readily and understandingly. He should have a fair knowledge of the physical features and natural and industrial resources of his own town, State and Nation, and some knowledge of these subjects in foreign countries. He should be familiar with the noted places, persons and events of his own State and Nation, and have such a foundation for historical research as will enable him to prosecute his studies intelligently and continue his reading with a reasonable understanding of historical and biographical references. He should have gained a love for and an appreciation of some writer of recognized worth. He should have that appreciation of art which will help him to understand in some measure the teachings and beauties embodied by artists. He should have such an introduction to nature as will make him a lover of some of its forms and an observer of some of its manifestations.

Meager as this outline is, yet it is full enough to indicate with distinctness the difference between what is and what should be. If a child completes his work in the elementary schools without coming fairly up to this standard, some one who is responsible for his training has failed in his work.

It is well to remember that there are certain stages in the development of the child when he does certain parts of this work better than he can

do it at an earlier or later period. Early in life the observing and imaginative powers are active and should receive that nurture which will make them helpful through life. This period is followed by one in which it is easy for the child to accumulate material for future use. It is not necessary to state that this is one of the most important stages in the child's development, and that means should be used to store his mind with those things calculated to be of the greatest service in his school and adult life. Later comes the time when the child examines things in their relations, combines them into wholes and draws conclusions from facts known or relations observed. No school does its work well that fails to develop in the child the ability to reason intelligently and accurately to right conclusions.

There are times in the child's life when certain things appeal to him more forcefully than at an earlier or later period. He has reached a point in his development where he is in tune with the object or thought, and is ready to take in, in its fullness and richness. It should be a large part of the work of the teacher to watch the child so that she can make use of the facts learned in assisting him to the best use of his school opportunities. A child's aptitudes, temperament, needs and prospective labors, should have more to do with determining the class of which he shall be a member, the studies he shall pursue and the extent to which he shall master them than his age or size. It is doubtful if there is any single point in our school work in which so little intelligence and judgment are used as in the classification of children in the schools. The fact that a child has been to school a certain number of years, or is of a certain age, or happens to be of a certain size, usually has more to do with determining whether he shall be in the fifth reader class or the large geography than his knowledge of these texts or the use he is to make of the knowledge he acquires.

The country school furnishes the largest opportunities for individual instruction. A teacher has but little excuse for attempting to run all the children in a common mould. If she has square children, she is unwise to attempt to pull them through a round hole. And this course is peculiarly unjustifiable in the rural school, because it is here she can make the largest allowance for the mental, moral, physical and racial conditions of her children; hence these schools have been peculiarly fruitful in giving to the world a large number of rugged, independent, helpful characters. And yet the same principles apply, in a modified form, to the organization and classification of the country schools as to the graded school. The country child does not differ from the city child in the order in which his powers naturally unfold, and in his consequent fitness for doing certain things at certain times. The country school should be made more systematic in its work by having provided for it a well considered course of study, which should be so arranged as to preserve that distinctive characteristic by virtue of which the individualism of the pupil can be consulted.

BETTER INSTRUCTION FOR CITIZENSHIP.

Our public schools as such have as their primary function the promotion of good citizenship. If they fail to perform this primary function, they fail to accomplish the object for which they are maintained. The good citizen under a social and civil system like ours, must be gentle in manners, sound of morals, industrious and thrifty in so far as to produce and save more than he consumes, regardful of public rights and property, self-governing and cheerfully obedient to rightful authority. Are our public schools doing their full duty in moulding the youth who are being nurtured in them to such citizenship? While they are teaching the practical arts of reading, writing, the use of numbers and of language, and something of history and science, are they also intelligently and systematically teaching courtesy and honesty, industry and economy, self-control and self-reliance, and regard for public rights and civil law?

By their fruits they are to be judged. Their fruits are the boys and girls as we see them freed from the restraints of the schoolroom. Observe them in their intercourse with one another upon the playgrounds, or as you meet them in groups on their way to and from school; watch them as they mingle with their elders in social assemblies, and, making all due allowance for the exuberant spirit of youth and its impulsiveness, there will be found too often rudeness of speech and manner, and a want of respect for age and superiors, which give evidence of lack of right training somewhere. Engage their services in tasks which they ought to be capable of performing, and too often these tasks will be found poorly done or half performed, unless they are under constant, watchful oversight. Study the uses they make of the money they earn or which comes to them through parental indulgence, and too often it will be found frittered away for things useless or worse than useless. Observe the condition of many of the school buildings as they are to-day, and of the appliances and text-books furnished at public expense for the use of the children, and too often there will be found abundant evidence of want of respect for public property and of any proper feeling of responsibility for its care and preservation. Nor will one have to seek far for indications of petty lawlessness and disregard for private rights, which are not promising of future self-government and cheerful observance of law. While these things are so, he is not a pessimist who sees in the youth of to-day many things in conduct and habit, which augur ill for the future well being of society. And he is not a chronic faultfinder, who thinks that there is something faulty in the public schools, by reason of which these things are,—that somehow they are failing to do their full duty as agencies for the making of good citizens.

HIGHER LITERARY AND ART IDEALS.

While the public schools are primarily to educate to good citizenship, such is not their whole duty. While boys and girls are to get in them the training which makes for good citizenship, they should get more. They should get somewhat of the things which make for purer, nobler feeling and thinking and happier living.

The homes of to-morrow are to be made by the boys and girls who are in the schools of to-day. What those homes shall be will depend in no small measure upon what the schools are doing. The sweet courtesies of life should be in them; a spirit of thrift, honesty and honor should pervade them; a loving, wise, consistent, persistent authority should rule in them, begetting a cheerful, hearty, prompt obedience to parental rule; and better than all else, they should be sweet with an atmosphere of refinement and purity, of fine feeling and high thinking. Such homes are possible however humble they be. Such homes will exist when the home makers have an appreciation of and delight in the best in literature and art. Good books read and re-read, talked about, made friends of, will serve to create such an atmosphere; and good books to-day are within the reach of the poorest. Good pictures—not necessarily expensive paintings—pictures which take hold of the imagination and suggest things sweet and pure, things grand and heroic, will create such an atmosphere; and these pictures are not beyond the reach of any whose appreciation of them is strong enough to lead to a little self-sacrifice. Better, sweeter, more refined and happier therefor, is the home wherein are good books and pictures and objects of real art, which are appreciated and loved, than that in which these are lacking.

The schools, then, should do something toward making such homes the rule of the future rather than the exception as is too much the case to-day. To this end they should do something in a systematic, intelligent and persistent way toward creating in the children higher ideals of art and literature. They should require and compel, but not as wearying task work, the reading of something more than patchwork reading books—something of the master-pieces of literature. And the schoolroom should be something more than a seated floor surrounded by four bare walls of dingy or dead white and black. The white should give place to attractive tints, pictures, busts and other objects of art and beauty. A few of our schools are doing much to develop a love for the best in literature, and a few of our schoolrooms are made silent but potent educators to foster a love of the beautiful; but the great majority of them are doing little or nothing effective in either direction.

This need is not theoretical or fanciful, but a very real and practical one. The fever and unrest of our American life call for some anti-

dote, and none more effective can be found than this love and enjoyment of literature and art in the home. Our eager striving for wealth and material good is narrowing in its tendency, and nothing can better counteract such evils, than the broadening and liberalizing force of the great thoughts of the great thinkers of the ages, and the beautiful products of the pencil and the chisel of those who have interpreted for us in picture and statue the grander and more beautiful aspects of nature and life which have revealed themselves to the unsealed eyes of genius.

And there is, moreover, in a people's love for literature and art a source of national power and influence not to be overlooked or lightly estimated. This was the central idea in the old Greek education, and no people have had a larger influence over the thoughts of men of other lands and times. True the Greek nationality yielded to the victorious Roman legions; but subjugated Greece by her culture and art, became the mistress of Roman thought and life. We, like the Roman, are pushing for the mastery of the world, not with conquering legions, but by our inventive, industrial and commercial energies. To give us our largest mastery we must put into the products of our industries something which shall appeal to the sense of the beautiful, something of artistic fineness. And that we may meet the older peoples of the world on equal terms, we need to couple with our Roman push and enterprise the intellectual breadth, subtlety and polish of the Greek. In order to fulfil our manifest destiny, we must add to the utilitarian, scientific and civic elements in our education, this other element of literary and art culture; and with us this culture must have its beginnings in the common schools.

SCHOOL AND HOME.

Some of the needs outlined in the foregoing section of this document become emphasized when we consider more comprehensively and definitely what our common schools should do. We are to look to them for the education of the great body of citizens termed the common people. But not to them alone. The home has much to do here, and somehow it must be brought to coöperate with the school. To the two agencies working in harmonious co-ordination we must look for the building up of a people, intelligent, virtuous, thrifty, thoughtful, law loving and law abiding, able to appreciate the good things of life rightly lived. It will not be out of place, then, to consider how the right training of the child in some of its more general aspects, involves this co-ordinate action of the school and the home, and some of the conditions which will make such action most efficient.

It is a matter of common knowledge that the men and women who are occupying most of the commanding positions in all walks and stations of life to-day, came from the homes of the common people. Whenever a man or woman is found in professional or business circles with unusual capacity for directing the efforts of others, or with unusual skill in the use of his or her own powers, it is usually found that this person was born in a country home, trained in a common school and performed the work of a farmer's boy or girl. It has become an interesting study to statisticians to discover how many of the presidents, members of the president's cabinet, members of congress, governors and other persons holding distinguished and responsible positions, have passed through these experiences. This condition of affairs is somewhat peculiar to this country; but while it is peculiar, yet it is a part of the genius of our people, and it is destined to be as true in the future as it has been in the past. There is something about the surroundings and influences of some homes and lives which to an extent deprive children of the experiences which develop those masterful qualities necessary to success when they reach a point in life where they must depend upon their own efforts. The fact that a boy has few cares and little of what is known as personal responsibility, accounts for that peculiar quality of character which makes it difficult for him to grapple with a trying situation and compel success under hostile circumstances. Again the boy reared in affluence knows the obstacles which must be overcome if he is to win a first place in the fields in which his father or his father's associates have won their pre-eminence. The fear induced by this knowledge, together with his lack of physical and mental sturdiness, renders it difficult for him to enter upon a contest which seems so unequal. On the other hand, the country boy is trained from his youth to overcome ob-

stacles, grapple with difficulties, act upon his own judgment and be personally responsible for doing work under trying circumstances. These struggles develop in him those qualities which urge him to enter the conflict in larger and more difficult fields. He starts in the race ignorant of the trials which beset the professional or business man's career. This ignorance saves him from discouragement, and his native resolution and desire to excel push him into the fight, and once in he knows no issue but victory.

Thoughtful people, who are observing the children of the present time, think they discover that too many of the children who belong in the classes from which we have drawn so many distinguished men and women, are at present wanting in the training and experiences calculated to develop in them those qualities which make eminent careers possible. Some go so far as to say that we are breeding weak boys and girls in the great middle classes, because they are not trained to prompt obedience; that they are not required to work in such a way as to bring into action their physical, mental and moral powers; that they are developing the vices of the classes above and below them without showing the virtues of either; that they have the selfishness and narrowness of the one and the extravagance and frivolity of the other. If these things are true, it will be well for the children of Maine when the parents of the State realize that work might be as great a blessing to their children as it has been to them; and that if their children are to win honorable places they must commence the battle for success in the home and wage it continuously during school life, and thus be prepared by these efforts for the larger contest which will come to them later.

Parents, teachers and the community must share the responsibility of developing in the children those sterling qualities necessary to right and helpful living. If parents put the most of their vitality into their work and dissipations, they can endow their offspring but sparingly with this gift. The general tone and particular arrangement of the home should tend to develop abiding attachments rather than to excite degenerating emotions. The dress of the children should be of such quality and color as not to attract the attention of observers or absorb the thought of the wearer. Their food should be satisfying and nourishing rather than stimulating and irritating. Less time should be spent in walking the streets, vicious gossip, idle loitering and questionable games, and more time should be given to the school and sleep. They should not be brought in contact with such street scenes, social gatherings and public entertainments, in unending and unceasing recurrence, as to keep their minds in an unwholesome state of excitement and their emotions in a ferment of dissipation.

If the control of the child in the home is slight, fitful and unnatural, the school must be governed by that firm intelligence which secures unhesitating obedience and saves authority from being defied. If some have weak intellects, small self-control and but little of that peculiar force that characterizes a strong personality, these deficiencies are due to unwholesome surroundings, unrestrained and undirected activities and insufficient and demoralizing training. The teacher must not make the

mistake of failing to recognize the aptitudes and deficiencies of the child, and hence put forth small effort to develop the former or correct the latter.

School officials seem to fail to recognize the fact that there is something masculine about every girl and something feminine about every boy. They do not appreciate how much both need the help that is gained by associating with a brainy and vigorous man, and a refined, cultured and brainy woman. It is from the one that the children derive self-reliance, masculine force of character and an ambitious quality and fibre. By the other the harsher lines are softened, the personality is rounded and balanced and the gentler elements emphasized. This dual association arouses the intellect, schools the emotions and strengthens the will. It was a calamitous day for the children when the men were so largely excluded from the schools and thus from vital and formative contact with them. Women should predominate, but should not constitute our entire teaching force.

Many complaints are entered against the manners of children in the home, on the street and in public assemblies. These conditions are due to several causes. Children are no longer required to yield unquestioning obedience to properly constituted authority. Too many people fail to distinguish between a reasonable consideration for the rights and privileges of children and license to decide questions for which their age and want of capacity unfit them. And beside, the children are given a prominence in social and public life, which is harmful to them and offensive to those brought in contact with them. All this mismanagement of children is based upon false theories of what is best for them. A failure to give proper training in these particulars ends in the greatest injury which can be inflicted upon youth.

The school to an extent is responsible for the manners of children. It is believed that not enough is made of the social life of the school. The teacher is sometimes a czar sitting on the throne to command, and the pupils are rebellious subjects to be restrained by force of will or force of muscle. If more teachers would adopt a conversational tone and the manners found in our cultured homes, the children would be less bold and rude in their conduct. In too many schools, the time before the opening of the sessions and the recess and noon periods, are given up to conduct and conversation that should not be permitted in any schoolroom. No child should be allowed to wear his wraps, and particularly his hat, in the schoolroom. He should be required to conduct himself like a gentleman would. The tone, manner, general conduct should be in harmony with the rules of good society. Loud, vulgar speech should not be permitted under any circumstances. During the school exercises special effort should be made to have the children walk, talk and conduct themselves as they would in their own homes when on their best behavior. The air of restraint, repression and domination, which is sometimes found in the schools during school hours, should be avoided. The teacher should give the children under her care the impression that she is their friend, guide, director and helper.

It is not true that things come to him who waits, unless he is working while he is waiting. Work is as necessary to development as to living, and we cannot make much of ourselves except we grow by our own efforts. It is necessary for us to realize that, if we are to grow, we must draw our strength from thought, effort, aspiration. It must be clear to any thoughtful person that the tendency of the present age is to breed in the children a Bohemian spirit and tone that is peculiarly unwholesome. The desire for attractive dress, the anxiety to be before the public and the ambition to be amused and entertained have become so strong in many young people that it would be well for parents and teachers to consider for a time the wisdom of developing in the children right ideas of what life is. If we clad our children in plainer apparel, fed them with more simple and more nourishing food and bred in them the desire to be responsible for some service, we should not be discouraged by the manifestations we see exhibited on the part of some boys and girls. They would travel the streets less; they would be found in the home more; they would be less restive under restraint; they would be more willing to obey directions; they would be less devoted to excitement and frivolities; and they would have a larger interest in study, thought and work. In a word, they would be growing into young men and women who have some object in life, and who are beginning to realize that if they are to fill a place in the world they must commence at the bottom, toil through the stages which come between the beginning and an advanced position, and earn by their own work and merit a respected place in the community. The time has come when it would be well for us to understand that what we become depends upon what we are and what we do, and that others cannot give us grace, strength, right motives. These things must be a part of us, and a power within us.

Our peculiar temptation at the present is to develop the feeling that we can gain benefits without making an effort to win them or giving a fair equivalent for them. Our children need to have impressed upon them that they must pay for what they have; that this pay must be rendered in one form or another. It is as true now as it has ever been that we must be saving of what we have if we wish to possess things; that thrift, economy and prudence are as desirable virtues now as they have ever been; and that one cannot be lavish in his expenditures and still possess those things which give comfort and dignity to advancing years.

It is equally true that the time has come when it is important that our children be taught how to make use of things to get the greatest good and the greatest value out of them. We have spent our days in studying schemes and devising methods of producing at the least cost. We would do well to spend some of our effort in discovering how we may use the things which we have acquired and get and render the greatest good in their consumption. If we knew more and knew better how to clothe, feed and house ourselves, we should be better clothed, fed and housed. If we had a larger and better knowledge of fabrics, foods and building materials, we would be able to get more of what we need for a dollar than we are getting at the present time. These things are worthy of our time, our attention, our study. We need less of display and more

of substance. We need more of those things which are of the substantial and real and less of decoration and ornament. We need a better knowledge of what contributes to the best in life, and a better knowledge of what we can dispense with and not be injured by the failure to possess.

It is a matter of supreme importance that children be so trained as to develop a reasonable sense of values. They should be led to see and properly appreciate what is of moment and consequence as contrasted with what is temporary and frivolous. The spirit, conduct and instruction of the teachers should be such as will assist them in deciding these questions wisely. A pupil who leaves school unfitted to place a proper estimate upon thought, action, things, is a person unfit to take up the serious duties of life. He must know from reading, study, investigation, what things are to abide and should occupy the largest share of his attention, and should be able to separate them from those that are of lesser importance and are but for the moment. He must be so taught that he can easily see the relations, proportions and harmonies of things. Such teaching will develop thoughtfulness on the questions of why we are here, what we are to do while we are here and our duty to ourselves and to others. Such training will breed in the children self-control, intelligent obedience and self-reliance.

In discussing these more general phases of training for right living, in which schools and homes are co-ordinate factors, educators should not hesitate to give due emphasis to the influence of home. Indeed, the home is, in many respects, the more important of these factors. A careful student of American life makes the following statement in relation to this home training: "The lack of primary education in the household in obedience and properly constituted authority, explains why so many American boys of respectable parentage and fairly educated in other respects, are a disgrace to their parents, a nuisance to their neighbors and a menace to society." He also says, "that self-conceit is no doubt a natural failing of the immature, but its exorbitancy in irreverence and contempt for legitimate authority, is now so serious that it has become an urgent question how to reduce it to safe and tolerable limits." He further states, "that students of social questions are now bringing into prominence the fact that the prime causes of social degeneracy and the roots of social regeneration are in the family life. The primary lesson of self-control, a respect for authority and prompt and unquestioning obedience to law, is unlikely to be begun or learned later if untaught in these plastic years."

It is, then, one of the first duties of the school to teach prompt and complete obedience to the commands of all persons who have the right to give directions to others. This should be the instruction and practice of both the home and the school. One evil that results from these short comings is found in the want of respect which children show for their elders, their superiors, and for public property. All thoughtful people must regret the selfish manifestations which come under their daily observation. It is noticeable that children will crowd themselves into places where it is becoming in them to wait until their elders have been served. Any one who has occasion to be present at public dinners

or public assemblages of any kind, notices that children are wanting in that consideration which keeps them from pushing themselves to the first table, and into the best seats, and prevents them from showing proper courtesies to those who are older, and entitled to respectful treatment at their hands. The disposition to destroy public property or use it in a destructive way has increased to an alarming extent within the last twenty years. Many children seem to have the feeling that, if anything is furnished and paid for by the public, they have no responsibility for protecting it or using it in such a way as to get the greatest good out of it and inflict the least injury upon it. They are destructive to an extent that shows a condition of feeling which gives one great uneasiness when he realizes to what results such practices must lead. The school and the home should train children to have a proper regard for public property and the rights of the public, and should teach that one is no more justified in abusing property owned by the public, than he is in abusing property owned by a private individual.

SUMMARY.

The conditions that should obtain in the public schools may be summarized as follows: The subjects which the children shall study, the order in which they shall be studied and the methods of instruction must be under the control of an educational expert. No teacher must be asked to care for more children than she can serve as individuals. She must be a scholar in the sense that history will tell her the path her children have come and why the ages have made them what they are. Her knowledge of science must be so familiar that she can count the pulse of nature. Her companions in art and literature must be those who have written the record of the world before it was lived and have made their prophecies and longings a part of the progress of the race. Her knowledge of the children must be founded on a sympathy as just, and an intelligence as broad as all this training makes possible. When these conditions are found in a majority of our homes, and in the schools, then, will parents have furnished their children with that capacity for work which is necessary to labor in the schoolroom and to success in life; and, then, will the school coöperate with the home toward the same great end. Then, too, will be begotten in the home the beginnings of that refinement of spirit and love for the beautiful upon which the school can build a love for the best in literature and art.

The children must have school surroundings and a school atmosphere conducive to refinement of spirit and manner and high ideals of literature and art and life. Rude and ugly surroundings are not promotive of refinement of feeling, thought and action. A lifeless atmosphere does not conduce to quickened spiritual and mental activity. And so school site, room, furnishing and teacher must be of a character to inspire and nurture high, pure and refined ideals. The ideal common school will have a yard of not less than one acre and a frontage of not less than 180 feet which will be so located as to furnish attractive scenery in its.

vicinity, and will be furnished with necessary drainage. On its area will be built outbuildings and an attractive schoolhouse. The material and colorings of the school building, the lighting and ventilating of the same, will be of such a character as to be most helpful to the pupils who use it. The school will be supplied with the necessary text-books so that the pupils may prosecute their work to the best advantage. The walls will be decorated with, at least, one work of art which will be a source of inspiration to the children. The school officials, teacher and children will provide such maps, charts, and other apparatus as are needed in the work the school has to do. The teacher will have a thorough mastery of the facts she has to teach, a reasonable knowledge of those which are naturally tributary to them, and will have such a knowledge of history and current events as is necessary in the intelligent teaching of any subject. She will be a student and lover of some author of acknowledged merit, will be able to interpret some work of art and will have a reasonable knowledge of the methods approved by educational leaders. The parents living in the community in which the school is maintained will know the teacher who has charge of their children, will be acquainted with her antecedents and qualifications and will give her that support which comes from an intelligent sympathy with the school and its work. Modest as are these statements, yet, one is sometimes shocked at the contrast which is exhibited when one compares this outline with the conditions found in many communities. When a school, housed, equipped, taught and supported as indicated above has been in operation for a series of years, it should graduate boys and girls who have that moral quality which makes it easy for them to distinguish between right and wrong, and give them the strength which enables them to do the right and shun the wrong. They will be gentle in their manners and courteous in their conduct. They will have had enough training to enable them to master the printed page and delight in its study. They will have that control of their bodies and knowledge of their care which will make it a delight for them to engage in mental and physical work. They will have that skill in the use of their hands and heads, which will assist them in making the most of the best in them.

The teacher's manners, conduct, tone, carriage and speech should be such as are found in cultured homes. It is no longer necessary for a teacher to be a tyrant. It is possible for a teacher to conduct a school on the same principles that the most intelligent parents manage their homes. The requesting of pupils to do things instead of commanding them to do them, the observing of the forms of courtesy which prevail in good society, and the air and atmosphere of ease, comfort and quiet which prevail among good people should be found in every schoolroom. Children should be so instructed that they will go quietly and industriously about their work and will no more think of being rude and annoying in the schoolroom than in the home. It is a part of the work of the school to train people to live in other relations. This training can never be well done until it is given in such a way as to be in harmony with the other relations in which children are placed.

But to make the ideal common school there must be in it the ideal teacher. Such will be a teacher of culture, and culture comes from the mastery of something of the best in literature. She will be, therefore, a lover and student of good books. It is a regrettable fact that some of our teachers of to-day are not of this class. Statistics furnished by about one thousand of the most capable and progressive teachers in the State indicate with considerable clearness that many of them are not readers of a sufficient number of books to enable them to be considered well read. It is difficult to understand why so many teachers read so few books of recognized merit. It would be supposed when the works of the masters, and our best papers and magazines can be procured for so small a sum, that every teacher would have mastered some work that might properly be called a classic, and that she would be a regular and critical reader of some first-class periodical. But when certain teachers are asked to state definitely what they have read and to express their opinions of the books they name, they seem to have failed to do this work at all or have done it in such a way as to have derived little benefit from it. It seems necessary, therefore, to preach a crusade on this matter of the reading which teachers should do.

No instructor can be of much service to those placed under her care until she has come to love some of the masters and is thoroughly familiar with some of their representative works; not familiar in the extent to which a casual reading will give familiarity, but in the sense of being the companion, the intimate friend, and counseled daily by some superior mind. The teachers of Maine must learn to appreciate and love Chaucer for the realistic faithfulness with which he draws the portraits of people; to delight in Spenser for the beauty of the ideal characters he created before they were born into the world or the world was ready for them to be born; to understand the wonderful interpretations of character, quality and motives given us by Shakespeare; to go with Milton and Bunyan in their splendid flights of imagery, and to feel at home in the worlds they created and bodied forth; to take delight in the literary finish, polish and grace of the writings of Addison and Pope; to understand nature better because they have seen it through the eyes of Burns and Wordsworth; to know the heart more fully because of the revelations which Tennyson, Longfellow and Whittier have given us of the emotions which make so large a part of modern living, and give tone, quality and philanthropy to our lives. Some one or more of these must be a constant companion, a familiar friend, a delight in leisure and an inspiration in busy moments. They must be read, pondered, digested, assimilated until they see what these men saw, feel what these men felt, and breathe that divine atmosphere which they created. When this great and good day comes, the wooden use of fourth and fifth readers will cease in our schools. The divine harmony which our great masters have sung, and the great thoughts which our leaders have given us, will again inspire our children to better work, and hence to better preparation for work. Most children will remain strangers to the best in our literature until they are introduced into this world of beauty and wisdom by one who knows of its richness and value by personal experience. What

a teacher reads because she loves to read it, shows itself in her face, manner, carriage, tone, conversation, life, influence. If she is not a reader, she cannot be a helper to the children. If she is a reader and understands what she reads, her personality will do more for the children than is done by many teachers who teach the facts of the text-book with a wearisome and wearying faithfulness.

THOUGHTS BY THE WAY.

In the study or discussion of educational problems many thoughts occur which do not seem logically related to the problem studied, or which seem superfluous to the discussion in hand. Frequently such thoughts by the way have in them a kind of truth or a suggestiveness, which gives them value and renders them worthy of expression. Of such character it is hoped the following will be found; and because of such hope they have been roughly grouped together and given a place in this document.

I.

The successful teacher has the instincts of the student and the habits of the scholar.

Teachers must become more conscious of the fact that it is not what they say or do, but it is the size and quality of the person behind what is said or done that gives it power.

The teacher is to an extent responsible for the interest which the best people in the community have in her and the work she is trying to do. The best people in the community are responsible for the interest which the teacher manifests in the children under her instruction, and the quality of the work she helps them to perform.

One of the great thinkers read some part of a great poem, listened to classical music, and studied a great picture each day. Would not the teachers of Maine do better work if they learned a lesson from one of the masters?

Teachers and school officials would do well to keep silent under criticism unless they are sure that explanation or denial will serve some purpose.

A teacher should know her pupils so well that she knows who sat in the rear right hand corner last term, and also knows what he was interested in, and what he is best fitted to do, and will devise some means of assisting him to do his best.

The wise teacher studies books a part of the time and children all the time.

When the teacher is what she should be in tone, manner and conduct, then, will the children go from our schools with the habits, instincts and graces of gentlemen and gentlewomen.

Any teacher who is observant of the children under her charge will know that the thirst for sympathy is so great that it is impossible for a child to do his best unless he feels that he has the kindly, individual interest of his instructor. This interest may be indicated by a word, a look, a tone, or a gentle hand upon the shoulder. A great man has said

that even a dog goes down the street with a better heart if he has a pat on his head when he starts.

It is as true in teaching as in any other work, that things should not be done unless there is a sufficient reason for doing them.

While we should use the utmost precaution to prevent children from using stimulants or narcotics, we should use no less effort to prevent them from indulging in mental and moral dissipations which will be equally fatal to their welfare.

Instruction that does not influence pupils in their morals, manners and reading out of school is poor teaching. The teacher does a great service for the children when she impresses them with the fact that cheap thought and cheap action result in cheap people.

To develop the power to do, the child must be thrown on his own resources for themes of thought and means of growth. He must be brought into closest contact with his tasks and nature, and left to work out his problem and his mental salvation. He must be an interesting companion to himself, and breed force enough to shun vicious associates voluntarily. His work must tend to concentrate his thought and form the habit of digging out his results without the aid of others. He must develop the power to return and work upon his problem until the point of saturation is reached.

II.

The best test of the quality of one's scholarship is found in the quality of the company he is in when he is alone, and the ease with which he entertains himself.

Education should not be valued for the facts we learn but for the power it gives us to do better work.

We are not educated until we can see, feel and appreciate instinctively, and hence unconsciously.

We never know facts as we should, until we know them so well that we are unconscious of our knowledge, and they cease to be a burden.

The school which fails to develop right motives fails grievously.

The school is responsible for such training as will make it easy for the children to observe conventional forms.

A true education will enable us to see objects, appreciate thought and understand relations. It will enable us to combine facts, weigh arguments and draw conclusions. It will make us responsive to our best emotions; our purest feeling will control our acts, mould our conduct, direct our thought and give tone to our life.

III.

Communities will not maintain the best schools until the people realize the difference between furnishing employment for teachers and instruction for children.

If we put more intelligence into the administration of our schools, we would need to put less money into jails and the administration of our criminal code.

It is discouraging to realize that many people do not want to know how to do, but rather want things done for them. It is true in some cases that teachers and school officials do not want directions and outlines for work, but some one to systematize and do the work for them.

The school that does not make the indifferent in the community different, needs to be changed.

Those who have our school interests in charge would do well to consider seriously the following question: Can we improve the schools if we continue to use the machinery now in existence, or must new methods be devised for their administration? Put in a more general form, is it possible for any age to use successfully the methods which were useful in a preceding age?

Many of the children who attend rural schools never attend any other school; hence the importance of having them so administered as to enable the children to prepare for life.

IV.

The steam that makes the engine go in the running of the school is the sentiment which exists in the community in favor of it. If it is hearty and intelligent, the school will do much for the children. If this interest and sympathy are wanting, it will fall but little short of a failure. No school is doing the best work until it is recognized as the intellectual and art center of the community. No teacher properly fills the position in which she is placed who is incapable of helping to make it such a center.

It will be well for the schools when we realize that some of the old fashioned things were good things in their day, and would be helpful in these days. If we had more mental arithmetic; if the pupils did more of their own work; if they were able to analyze some of the English classics in such a way as to understand their thought and appreciate their beauties, we should be doing some things much better than we are doing them at present.

V.

Exhibitions of boldness and ill manners, manifestations of selfishness and an unwillingness to think seriously of serious things should make us apprehensive of what these same children will be when they become men and women.

It is unfortunate for children to be old beyond their years, to know things which it is unwise for them to know, and to be thinking of sex relations long before such thoughts should enter their minds. If they have lost their relish and interest in the duties which should make up a large part of their lives and are more anxious to fill an inferior place in some store or shop than they are to continue their studies, and fit themselves for a useful place in society, then, we must realize that some one has failed in what he has given these children at their birth or made them since they were born.

It is natural for young people to be ambitious, and when we find them limp, lifeless and frivolous, we do not wonder that they dislike work and look with contempt upon labor and those who perform it.

One's work is or should be his university. Boys tumble down, tumble over themselves, tumble against others, because they do not know how to use their powers.

Our civilization and prosperity cost too much if they deprive our young people of the sturdiness that characterized those who lived in a simpler way. We are furnishing so many amusements for the children that they have ceased to be amused. We are giving so much instruction that they are incapable of learning. We do so much work for them that they are losing the desire and capacity to work.

One can easily acquire what man has gathered into cities, because in this acquisition he has to gather to himself what others have gathered together. One must be born in the country to acquire the strength which comes from living close to nature, because it is only here that one comes in direct contact with causes and wisdom at first hands.

The boy who is born in the country has the advantage of his disadvantages; he is forced into a place where he must struggle if he wins. The boy who is born in the city suffers from the disadvantages of his advantages; he, in so many cases, has simply to push a button to have his wants supplied.

One of the greatest misfortunes that can come to a child is to feel that he does not need to fit himself for work, and, therefore, does not need to work, because his parents have the money which will save him from work. To feel that one does not need to engage in any occupation because there is no pressing immediate necessity, or to win the ease which money can give without being willing to perform the labor necessary to earn it, is to degenerate into a condition that leaves but little hope for the victim.

Poverty and want of social success save many boys from temptation, drive them in on themselves, and urge them to do something worthy. The consciousness that we are failing in certain minor ways often stimulates us to vindicate our ability to win success in larger fields.

It is peculiarly unfortunate for our rural communities that so few of the young men and young women who are pursuing courses in our colleges spend so few of their college days in our common schools. This misfortune affects three interests; the college, the student, and the local community. The college is dropping out of touch with the smaller towns and to an extent is losing that interest which formerly existed, and which came into being through the contact of the students with the people in the relation of teacher and taught. It is an injury to the students, because they lose the experience and training which come from being responsible for devising ways and means in teaching the school, a knowledge of life in various conditions and relations, and the stimulus which comes from being considered of a superior order of beings. The college student who took charge of a country school was placed in a position where he was held responsible for dignity of conduct, quality of judgment, extent of reading, and capacity for management. All these things go to make breadth, strength and grasp, and hence were peculiarly useful to him in his work in college and his struggles in life. The community, and particularly the children, have lost the inspiration which

came from contact with some one who was fresh from college halls, and who was eager to impart to others of his knowledge. The older people lived over again their younger days, and the young people were stimulated to better conduct, greater effort, and a desire to walk the paths which this comely collegian was traveling.

Vile physical surroundings, vicious literature and cigarette smoking are among the great evils from which our common schools are suffering.

If we get the physical and intellectual eyes and ears of the children open and can breed in them the desire to know, we have made it possible for them to be educated.

It is noticeable that the teacher tends to become absorbed in his textbook; the preacher in his sermon; the lawyer in his briefs; the business man in his merchandise; and the farmer in his crops. The tendency of the age seems to be in the direction of intense occupation with the special interests which have come to be our life work. All this is well enough in its way, but it is working great evils, both to the people who follow such practices and to general interests which must depend upon the general public. If each knew more about the other and the work of others, each would be better prepared for his own work. It is only by contact, conference, and concert of action that the best work can be done by the individual and the best things can be done for all. A man who is not larger than his profession is too small to be large in his work, or helpful to others.

Instruction in Agriculture and Domestic
Economy in Rural Communities
in Wisconsin.

Transportation of Rural School Pupils at
Public Expense.

BULLETIN OF INFORMATION NO. 3.

ISSUED BY
L. D. HARVEY,
State Superintendent.



MADISON
DEMOCRAT PRINTING COMPANY, STATE PRINTER,
1900.



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AGRICULTURE AND DOMESTIC ECONOMY IN RURAL COMMUNITIES.

By L. D. HARVEY, STATE SUPERINTENDENT.

There has been for some time a steadily growing demand that provision should be made in the public schools for instruction in the principles of agriculture. This question has been discussed in farm journals, in farmers' institutes, at meetings of the National Congress of Farmers, and by writers in scientific, educational, and other journals. The Province of Ontario has this year provided for giving instruction in this subject in all the rural schools within its borders. In New York, work has been going on for two or three years, under the auspices of the agricultural department of Cornell University, directed toward securing intelligent and effective work in nature study in the public schools of the state. In other states, the subject has been agitated, but little has been attempted beyond the work of the agricultural colleges and experiment stations. This wide-spread interest in and discussion of the subject, should arrest the attention of those engaged in educational work, and especially all those who have to do with the determination of educational systems and policies.

The discussion concerning the incorporation of courses of study in domestic economy in our public schools, with special reference to the needs of the girls, has been confined almost entirely to the cities. There is a growing sentiment in this country in favor of making a place for that study in our public school courses. An examination of the field will disclose the fact that in manual training, in the specific work known under the head

of domestic economy, and in the work in agriculture thus far organized in this country, we are far behind foreign countries, both in the scope of the work attempted and in the extent to which it has been organized. France, Germany, Ireland, Belgium, Denmark, Norway and Sweden, have all made far greater progress than we in giving instruction in the principles of agriculture, in grades of schools below the agricultural college. Most of these countries have developed work in manual training in large numbers of schools, to an extent found in but few of the cities in this country. In several of those countries they have also made much progress in teaching domestic economy to pupils in the public schools. In view of the extent to which these lines of work have been carried in the countries of Europe, and of the agitation for their organization in the United States, the following questions arise:

First:—Is this new demand simply another fad, or does it grow out of a real necessity which is coming to be recognized by the people?

Second:—In the field of agriculture, is there any useful body of knowledge which can be taught outside the agricultural college, to farmers' boys, either in existing schools or in schools to be specially organized for such work?

Third:—Will this body of knowledge, if taught, and the training coming with the mastery of it, be of greater practical value to these people than any other body of knowledge and accompanying training which could be given during the same time? The same questions apply with equal force to the subject of domestic economy in the teaching and training of girls, in rural communities.

The foregoing questions will now be considered in order.

FIRST:—"IS THIS NEW DEMAND SIMPLY ANOTHER FAD, OR DOES IT GROW OUT OF A REAL NECESSITY WHICH IS COMING TO BE RECOGNIZED BY THE PEOPLE?"

In considering this question it is necessary first to consider how far existing school facilities in rural communities meet the needs of the young people being educated in those communities, and also to what extent the boys and girls living in the rural districts are availing themselves of the opportunities for education offered in the high schools and higher institutions in cities. The complaint is universal that the common schools in rural communities are not up to the standard which is desired. Those who know anything of the conditions in these schools believe this complaint to be well founded. This condition is due in part to the fact that the teachers in those schools have not had proper training, that their work is not properly supervised, and that the term of school is not of sufficient length. It is also due to other conditions incident to the scattered population, and the exigencies of farm life. These conditions are such as to make it impossible to give the kind of training and instruction in these schools which is needed to secure the best results. Does the common school in rural communities equip the boys and girls attending them as they should be equipped to successfully meet the conditions of rural life which exist today?

DEMANDS WHICH MODERN CONDITIONS MAKE UPON THE SUCCESSFUL FARMER.

The farmer feels the press of competition at the present time more than ever before in the history of this country. Facilities for transportation make it possible to lay down farm products grown at great distances from him, in his home market. Industrial organization in various lines is making itself felt upon the farm. The farmer of the future must be not only intelligent in his farm work, but he must be a business man as well. To farm successfully today, requires greater intelligence and business sagacity than ever before. In manufacturing it has come

to be recognized that technical training and skill based on scientific knowledge are absolutely essential for success in competitive fields. The same thing is true of farming. The farmer must know something of the scientific basis upon which successful results in agriculture depend. He must be able to read intelligently books and journals which present the results of the latest investigation, thought, and experience in his line of work. He must not only have the ability to do such reading, but he must know that it is a necessity for him to do it, and he must have a desire to do it. He must also know how to carry into his work on the farm, principles of business organization such as are required in any other field of industrial or commercial enterprise. He must know whether a given crop or stock product is costing him year by year more than it returns to him, and if so, he must understand what modifications it is necessary for him to make, in the carrying on of his farm, in order to prevent such loss. He should also be familiar with the principles of economics at least in so far as those principles in their application, affect him personally. He should also have such a further knowledge of economic conditions which may be affected by legislation, as will enable him to reach correct judgments, that may determine his action as a voter and as a citizen.

In order to secure the most desirable quality of citizenship, other things than these are also necessary. Some of these additional things the schools are now attempting, with more or less success, to give.

EDUCATIONAL CONDITIONS IN RURAL COMMUNITIES.

In Wisconsin last year, the total enrollment in the public schools was 429,794. Of this number, 306,574 were enrolled in the rural schools. In the city high schools there were enrolled 2,565 non-resident pupils. These may properly be regarded as pupils from rural communities who are attending high schools in the cities, leaving 306,574 enrolled in the country schools who get practically no further school training than that afforded by these schools. The greater number of these boys and girls will

continue to live in the country, although many of them will drift to the cities, some to achieve success, others to be lost in the whirl of city life.

Will any one contend for a moment that the instruction given in the rural schools will adequately equip these 306,574 boys and girls for the highest success, either on the farm or in the city? Remembering that these country schools are taught by teachers in many cases poorly prepared, and unaided by good supervision, considering the irregularity of attendance, and the length of the school year, could it be expected that the most desirable results would be secured? These pupils go out from the school with perhaps a better knowledge of arithmetic than of any other subject taught, and yet those who have had to do with them, know how meager their knowledge of this subject is, and how little skill they possess in applying this knowledge in practical business operations. They have learned a few facts of geography, most of which will be forgotten within a year after the close of school. Few of them have any adequate command of the English language, or know how to write a business letter. They have studied some text book in U. S. history, but have probably learned more of the details of battles and campaigns than of any other phase of the history. Of the commercial, industrial, and economic development of the country, they know little or nothing. They have committed to memory some portions of the constitution of the state and of the national government, but know little of civic life beyond this. Not one in ten of them can read a popular book on the principles of agriculture, or a farm journal intelligently. Of the sciences upon which successful practice in agricultural pursuits depends, they know absolutely nothing. And yet, they are to enter upon their life work with this preparation. I am not claiming that all this work can properly be done in the rural schools, nor that all of it can wisely be undertaken. With properly trained teachers it is possible that beginnings in the study of elementary science might be made in the rural schools, but few of the pupils have the maturity of mind to enable them to grasp anything beyond the merest rudiments of

these sciences until after their days of attendance at the rural schools have passed. In this discussion I am confining myself chiefly to the specific preparation for intelligent work in agriculture and in domestic economy, and shall not attempt to discuss the general lines of training now undertaken in the public schools. I am not now contending that the schools shall give all the information and training essential for the farmer's success. The schools can not do it if they would. A large part of this training and information must come from the boy's experience in the actual work of farm life. What I am contending for is that the schools at the present time and under present conditions of organization, do not furnish such knowledge and training as will enable the farmer's boy to make the most of himself upon the farm, and to derive the largest benefit from his contact with and experiences in the every day work of the farm. His interest in farm journals is confined chiefly to the illustrations and the advertisements. He does not care to read, and could not read intelligently if he would, much of the matter which would be of most value to him in these journals. The same is true of the large number of most excellent books now published dealing with the best modern practice in farming.

Thus far I have been dealing with the conditions under which the boy enters upon an active farm life. How is it with the girl? Her instruction in the rural school has been the same as that given the boy. Has it better fitted her for her duties in rural life than it has the boy? Whatever she has learned directly fitting her to discharge these duties, she has learned in the home and not at the school. I believe that she may better learn many things in the home than in the school. I know she does not learn many things in the home which she ought to know and practice in her own home later on, both for her own well being, comfort and happiness, and for that of her family; and I further know that many of these things may be taught in the school. Not all of them in the rural school, under existing conditions, but that a school may be so organized as to give knowledge and training in these essentials.

PRESENT AGITATION DUE TO A RECOGNIZED NEED FOR SOMETHING BETTER.

In view of these considerations does it not appear likely that the present agitation in favor of a more practical training of boys and girls in the rural communities, for the every day concerns of rural life, is the outcome of a careful consideration of these questions, of an agitation on the part of those who have considered them, which has resulted in an awakening of public sentiment, culminating in a demand for something different at least, from what we now have. With many people the demand is based upon dissatisfaction with present conditions; a demand for something, they know not what. They see that the rural schools are not doing for country boys and girls all that they need to have done for them, and while they are vague as to what more shall be done, and as to how, when, where, and by whom it shall be done, they are earnest in the desire that something shall be done. This demand, then, is not a fad; it has grown out of a settled conviction on the part of a large number of people that improvement is necessary, and they are looking to those whose business it is to study, shape, and organize educational systems and policies to show the way in which it can be done.

SECOND:—"IN THE FIELD OF AGRICULTURE AND DOMESTIC ECONOMY, IS THERE ANY USEFUL BODY OF KNOWLEDGE WHICH CAN BE TAUGHT OUTSIDE THE EXISTING AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE AND TECHNICAL SCHOOLS, TO FARMERS' BOYS AND GIRLS, EITHER IN EXISTING SCHOOLS, OR IN SCHOOLS TO BE SPECIALLY ORGANIZED FOR SUCH WORK?"

This is a question which most people will at once and without hesitation answer affirmatively, and yet it is not so easy to formulate the body of knowledge which can be so taught. The Province of Ontario, in Canada, answers this question by putting

into every rural school in the Province this year, a text book on Practical Agriculture, which is to be taught by the teachers of those schools. This book deals in Part I with *The Plant*; Part II, *The Soil*; Part III, *The Crops of the Field*; Part IV, *The Garden, Orchard, and Vineyard*; Part V, *Live Stock and Dairying*; Part VI, *Other Subjects*, which includes chapters on bees, birds, forestry, roads, and the rural home, and an appendix giving list of trees, list of weeds, spraying mixtures.

Cornell University has organized a bureau in its agricultural department which is this year expending \$18,000 in an effort to secure an intelligent consideration of nature study in the common schools of New York. Prof. Bailey, who is at the head of this bureau, does not send out a formal course of study, but does seek to secure organized effort through farmers' bulletins, leaflets for farmers' reading clubs, and leaflets for the teachers which give in detail lessons in nature work, and which are to serve as a guide for the teachers in carrying on this subject in the school.

A number of the agricultural colleges of the country have organized short courses for the purpose of meeting the wants of the farmers' boys who have had no other education than that which the country schools afford. The short courses offered by the Agricultural Department of our own University are among the very best. In these short courses some very practical subjects are being considered, and that they are being considered with success is shown by the fact that the boys who take the work in the short courses are eagerly sought for to take positions at good wages. After even two short terms' work in these courses, the earning capacity of these boys, as measured by what farmers and dairymen are willing to pay for their services, is doubled or trebled.

It is unquestionably true that the school which is to best fit the boy or girl for farm life, and probably for any other kind of life, should undertake to train them to intelligently observe the things about them. It should not only train them to observe intelligently, but in the giving of that training it should

direct the observation so that it shall concern itself with what is worth observing, and so that the results of the observation will be not merely curious or interesting information, but knowledge which shall be of value. The study of nature to be of most value for the purposes under consideration, must go beyond mere observation of phenomena, and wherever it is possible, seek for the reasons lying back of the phenomena.

AGRICULTURAL INSTRUCTION PROVIDED FOR IN FOREIGN
COUNTRIES.

In Ireland agriculture has been for years a compulsory subject for boys of the fourth and higher classes in all rural schools, and it is optional for girls. For this work the Commissioners of National Education have laid down a program consisting of various chapters of a book entitled "Introduction to Practical Farming," which deals with such subjects as the following: Cultivation of land; manures; live stock; dairying; gardening; agricultural implements; land drainage and reclamation; farm fences; etc.

In France, instruction in "Elementary Ideas of Agriculture" is compulsory, and a complete scheme in the form of a practical guide for the uses of teachers for giving such instruction has been formulated. It states the aim as follows: "The aim of elementary instruction in agriculture is to initiate the bulk of our country children into that degree of elementary knowledge which is necessary to enable them to read a modern book on agriculture with profit, or to derive advantage from attending an agricultural conference; to inspire them with a love of country life, so that they may prefer it to that of towns and factories; and to convince them of the fact that agriculture, besides being the most independent of all means of livelihood, is also more remunerative than many other occupations, to those who practice it with industry, intelligence and enlightenment."

A former Director General of French agriculture, in speaking of agricultural instruction, says: "The aim and object of France has been not only to give to children and young people the means of acquiring knowledge, but also to establish means for interesting old cultivators. In this country of extreme

competition, we must admit that the agriculturist can only thrive if, in working the soil, he adopts scientific methods. Old routine is no longer sufficient in this branch, as it is proved to be insufficient in manufacture."

In Germany agricultural education has so broadened out as to include training in every technical part of a farmer's work, culture of forests, fruits, flowers and vines; schools to teach wine, cider, and beer making, machine repairing, engine running, barn construction, and surveying; knowledge of poultry, bees, and silk-worm raising; domestic economy, sewing and accounts for farm women.

The royal commission appointed to investigate the causes of agricultural depression in England, in 1897, reported among other things, as follows: "We believe that it is essential for the welfare of agriculture that there should be placed within the reach of every young farmer a sound, general school education, including such a grounding in the elements of sciences bearing upon agriculture, e. g., chemistry, geology, botany, and animal physiology, as will give him an intelligent interest in them and familiarize him with their language."

In the Scandinavian countries of Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Finland, agricultural education has reached a high stage of development. There are more than 150 agricultural, horticultural, forestry, and dairy schools in these four small states. Agricultural instruction in these states is not undertaken in the primary schools, but is offered in a class of schools corresponding somewhat to our high schools, taking as students young men who have reached 18 years of age, and who wish to fit themselves for the work of farming.

Nearly every other country of Europe, including Russia, as well as many of the colonial dependencies of European nations, have organized schools for the purpose of instruction in this subject. In view of these facts, it would appear that there must be a considerable body of knowledge concerning the subject of agriculture, which the schools may undertake to teach. In view of the status of agricultural instruction in France, Germany, Ireland, England, and the Scandinavian countries, it would seem

that there is such a body of knowledge pertaining to this subject as may properly be taught in the schools of a lower grade than the agricultural college.

WHAT MAY PROPERLY BE ATTEMPTED?

Without attempting to go into detail, it seems entirely reasonable to assume that instruction may be given profitably in schools of the grade of our elementary and secondary schools in the following subjects:

The Soil.

Plant Life.

Animal Life.

Economics of Agriculture.

Manual Training.

Domestic Economy.

In dealing with the first topic, *The Soil*, consideration should be given to its composition, modes of cultivation, fertilization, drainage, effect of rotation of crops upon the soil, means of restoring worn out soil to a condition of fertility, and the adaptation of different soils to different classes of products.

Under the second topic, *Plant Life*, there should be a consideration of the various forms of cultivated plants, including a knowledge of best varieties for local cultivation; germination; modes of growth; modes of harvesting; care for after harvesting; effect upon soils; economic values for marketing, for feeding, and for fertilization. For the boy who is to be a farmer, or the girl who is to be a farmer's wife, and possibly for any other boy and girl, the botany of the corn plants, the modes of growth of other forms of plant life on the farm, if properly taught, may prove at least of as much value as the study of mosses, or other forms of plant life upon which much time is now spent in the field of botanical instruction. This study would be for him a matter of practical utility, and would give him knowledge that would awaken an interest in the growth of agricultural products, resulting in more intelligent cultiva-

tion, better adaptation of crops to soil, and better financial returns.

Treatment of the third topic, *Animal Life*, should provide for a study of the domestic animals grown for pleasure or profit, including a knowledge of breeds and breeding; feeding; judging; care, including the prevention and treatment of the diseases of domestic animals; preparation for marketing either the animals or their products; and such knowledge of animal pests, and of the modes of treatment for the prevention of their ravages, thus far discovered, as would enable the farmer to save many a crop which otherwise might be ruined. Might not such knowledge be so organized and taught as to be of at least as great value, both for knowledge and for training, as the study of the tadpole, the crayfish, and the angle-worm?

In treating the fourth topic, *The Economics of Agriculture*, study should be made of the relations of the farmers to general industrial, and commercial organizations; of the economics of farm life, including a practical system of domestic accounting, which would enable him to tell with the same accuracy that the manufacturer tells, the cost of any given product during any given period of time.

Under the fifth topic, *Manual Training*, instruction could profitably be given in wood working, not only for the purposes of hand and eye training, but for the practical knowledge and skill resulting from such training, and which would be of value to him as a farmer. To this might be added elementary instruction in blacksmithing, which would enable him to make any of the simple repairs of tools at home, that otherwise he would be compelled to have done at a distance from his own home, and with considerable expenditure of time and money.

Under the general subject, *Domestic Economy*, instruction could be given in sewing, including dress making and millinery work, which certainly would be of value to the girls who are either to perform these lines of work for themselves, or to supervise that work when done for them by others. It would not only develop skill, but would cultivate the taste, and develop a

knowledge of the difficulties incident to such work which would make them more considerate of those who might be in their employ, or under their supervision.

In cooking, a course of instruction might properly be given which should include a knowledge of the constituent elements of food products, and their value for definite purposes, which would enable them to construct for the animal, man, a balanced ration. For all concerned this is perhaps as important as the determination of a balanced ration for the cow or the hog. It should also include a knowledge of invalid cooking, which would enable them to know what are proper foods for invalids and how to prepare such food. Such a course of training would develop economy and skill in the choice and preparation of food which would not only result in the saving of money, but in the better physical, mental, and moral condition of those fed. To this might be added practical instruction in the different details of housekeeping which would add much to the appearance, pleasure, and comfort of the home.

In horticulture and floriculture, instruction might be given which would be of value to both girls and boys in the matter of adornment and beautifying of the home surroundings.

For the work on the soil, on plant life, and animal life, and in cooking, a knowledge of essential scientific principles and their application would be necessary. It would not be necessary, even though it were desirable, to give extended courses in geology, botany, zoology, physics, and chemistry in order to place this instruction on a rational, scientific basis. For the teacher, it would be essential that he decide what is to be taught in any one of these branches, and then to decide what knowledge of science is necessary in order that the desired instruction may be properly given.

It must be apparent that in this paper it would be entirely improper to attempt to go into detail as to the precise things which should be taught in each of these subjects. The only question is, do these subjects, taken together, contain a body of knowledge of high utility to the country boy and girl, and

which may be taught to them? I have already indicated my belief that these subjects do embrace such a body of knowledge, and that under proper conditions that knowledge may be taught.

THIRD: "WILL THIS BODY OF KNOWLEDGE IF TAUGHT, AND THE TRAINING COMING WITH THE MASTERY OF IT, BE OF GREATER PRATICAL VALUE TO THESE PUPILS THAN ANY OTHER BODY OF KNOWLEDGE, AND ACCOMPANYING TRAINING WHICH COULD BE GIVEN DURING THE SAME TIME?"

This question is one which seems to me needs but little discussion. It is a body of knowledge which directly concerns these people in their subsequent vocations. It is a kind of knowledge which is essential today for success in those vocations. It is a kind of knowledge, both in scope and character, which will rarely be obtained by the individual unless obtained in the school. Is there any other body of knowledge which could be substituted for it, and which would be of higher utility to these people for all the practical purposes of life? If there be such another body of knowledge, I do not know what it is. I am thoroughly convinced that it is not the body of knowledge that these young people now get, even the few of them who complete the work of the secondary schools. Will the effort put forth in acquiring this knowledge result in training as valuable as the training resulting from the acquisition of a body of knowledge of less practical value? I am one of those people who believe that knowledge may be valuable in itself and that its acquisition may furnish the highest kind of training; that the student who spends time anywhere in any grade of school in acquiring knowledge of value only for training, when he might acquire other knowledge valuable for other purposes, and equally valuable for training, is wasting his time and energy. A five-dollar gold piece has a certain definite value, but the individual who would accept a five-dollar gold piece when he had his option either to take that or a ten-dollar gold piece, would be a fool. The essence of training is doing. In nearly

every one of the lines of work suggested, the student is brought into direct contact with things, is trained to study them and their relations to each other, to himself, and to other things; he would furthermore be constantly employed in dealing with these things, and not with words. He would be required to see something, and to do something at every stage of his work, and the seeing and doing would be guided by thoughtful consideration of means and ends. This training, while it would be general in its scope would, at the same time, be specific in nature as well; as it would develop skill along the lines where skill would be needed in his subsequent work. Do not these conditions furnish the best possible elements, both for the training of the mental and physical activities of the individual?

One of the chief purposes in education should be to develop interests, and one of the very necessary outcomes of such a course of training would be to develop an intelligent interest in the activities incident to rural life.

WORK ABOVE OUTLINED CAN NOT NOW BE DONE IN EXISTING
RURAL SCHOOLS.

If now I have established the proposition that the line of work indicated is demanded by existing conditions, that it is valuable and feasible, both for knowledge and training, the only question that remains to be answered is,—Under what conditions can such instruction be given? I wish to say at the outset, that I do not believe it feasible under existing conditions as to age of pupils, preparation of teachers, supervision of school work, and length of the school year, in rural schools as at present organized, to undertake much if any of this work.

A parliamentary commission appointed to investigate and report on Manual and Practical Instruction in Primary Schools under the board of National Education in Ireland, after a most exhaustive examination of the subject, reported last year as follows: "The evidence we have received throughout Ireland, goes to show that the subject as taught is of little educational value. This subject is taught in the national schools as a rule entirely

from a single text book, and is unaccompanied by any practical illustrations, a knowledge of the text book alone being required by the rules of the commission. The children do not get any real grasp of the subject, as no efforts need be made to give them a practical acquaintance with the objects and processes described in the lessons. For example, Dr. T. J. Alexander, Head Inspector of National Schools in Cork, states that the present book teaching is worthless. Mr. Purser, another Head Inspector, expressed the same opinion. Lord Monteagle, who is much interested in agricultural education, is of opinion that the present teaching out of a book is wholly useless if not worse. Similar evidence was given by many other competent witnesses. This opinion is quite in accordance with the evidence we received in England. Mr. T. G. Rooper, one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools in England, declared that he would never encourage the teaching of agriculture merely from a book. We are consequently of the opinion that the course of agriculture as at present prescribed for National Schools, should be altered. The new course should consist of instruction in the elements of the natural physical sciences that have a direct bearing on agriculture, and this instruction should be given with the aid of experiments of a simple character, performed as far as possible by the pupils themselves. Such a course of instruction will be of a nature entirely within the capacity of the children of a primary school. It will afford a good disciplinary training for all children, even for those who are not to be subsequently engaged in the practice of agriculture, while it will enable those who are to be so engaged, at a later stage, to make intelligent use of scientific treatises on the subject."

"The course in agriculture thus modified will naturally constitute the course in elementary science for boys in rural schools."

The following is from a publication recently issued by the French government, on "The Teaching of Elementary Ideas of Agriculture in Rural Schools":

"Instruction in the elementary principles of agriculture, such as can be properly included in the program of primary schools, ought to be addressed less to the memory than to the intelligence of the children. It should be based on observation of the every day facts of rural life, and on a system of simple experiments, appropriate to the resources of the school, and calculated to bring out clearly the fundamental scientific principles underlying the most important agricultural operations. Above all, the pupils

of a rural school should be taught the reasons for these operations, and the explanation of the phenomena which accompany them, but not the details of methods of execution, still less a resume of maxims, definitions or agricultural precepts. To know the essential conditions of the growth of cultivated plants, to understand the reasons for the work of ordinary cultivation, and for the rules of health for man and domestic animals—such are matters which should first be taught to every one who is to live by tilling the soil; and this can be done only by the experimental method.

“The master whose teaching of agriculture consists only in making the pupils study and repeat an agricultural manual, is on the wrong path, however well designed the manual may be. It is necessary to rely on very simple experiments and especially on observation.

“As a matter of fact, it is only by putting before the children’s eyes the phenomena to be observed, that they can be taught to observe and that the principles which underlie the science of modern agriculture, can be instilled into their minds. It should be remembered that this can be done for the rural agriculturist only at school, where it will never be necessary to teach him the details which his father knows better than the teacher, and which he will be certain to learn from his own practical experience.

“The work of the elementary school should be confined to preparing the child for an intelligent apprenticeship to the trade by which he is to live, to giving him a taste for his future occupation; with this in view, the teacher should never forget that the best way to make a workman like his work is to make him understand it.”

The course outlined by the French government indicates that the work designed for the elementary schools is of a character known in this country as nature study, and elementary science lessons, the scope and character of the science lessons being determined with reference to their bearing upon the subject of agriculture.

Nearly thirty years ago the experiment of introducing this subject into the district schools was tried in Canada, and proved so complete a failure that it practically put a stop to the whole matter until within the past two or three years. It is now being undertaken again, and time alone can determine what the success

of the experiment will be. If it should succeed there, it would be no proof that it would succeed here. No teacher is allowed in the schools of the Province of Ontario who has not had at least one year of professional training, and the training schools give instruction in this subject. Whenever we have in our rural schools a body of professionally trained teachers who have had specific instruction in this subject and modes of teaching it, we may then hope to make some progress in the rural schools, but until then, we must look elsewhere for this instruction.

A NEW CLASS OF SCHOOLS NEEDED IN RURAL COMMUNITIES, TO BE
KNOWN AS COUNTY SCHOOLS FOR INSTRUCTION IN AGRICULTURE
AND DOMESTIC ECONOMY.

Last winter the legislature in Wisconsin enacted a law authorizing county boards to make appropriations for the establishment and maintenance of county training schools for district school teachers, and provided for state aid to the amount of \$1,250 to each of the two schools first organized. The state aid was limited to two schools for the purpose of giving opportunity to try the experiment thoroughly before embarking upon it on any extended scale. The two schools were organized this year, and are meeting the most sanguine expectations of their promoters. Indications are that if the legislature shall extend the aid to other schools, there will in the near future be a considerable extension of this line of work.

For the purpose of giving the kinds of instruction I have been discussing, I venture to suggest the following plan:

Extend the idea upon which the county training schools for teachers were organized so as to provide for the establishment of county schools for instruction in agriculture and domestic science. Give to any county establishing such a school, state aid to the amount of at least one-half the sum actually expended for purposes of instruction in such school. Admit to these schools boys and girls who have at least completed the course of instruction in the elementary schools, and who have reached the

age of sixteen. Provide for courses such as I have already considered in discussing the body of knowledge which should be taught, including manual training, and make the course two years in length. Add to the courses already indicated such instruction in language, literature, history, and mathematics as may be carried on in connection with the other work. Such a school should have in connection with it a small tract of land to be used for illustrative and experimental purposes; not the line of experiments which the agricultural experiment station undertakes, but a more simple line which could be carried on under the direction of the teachers, and which would be of value for observation and training purposes. Such a school could give in addition to the other work, a great body of the work now given in the short courses in agriculture offered in our agricultural colleges, and it could carry on work in some lines, considerably in advance of what is now undertaken in those short courses. Such a school centrally located in a county would furnish an opportunity for attendance by residents of the county, at a very moderate expense. Many of the pupils could board at their own homes, while others could board themselves, returning home on Friday night, to remain over Sunday. Such a school would necessarily have to be equipped with such simple laboratory apparatus as would be necessary for the experimental work in science. It would need a well selected library of books on agriculture and domestic economy, and should be supplied with the best periodical literature pertaining to those subjects. It could be made a distributing center for that county, of the agricultural bulletins sent out from the agricultural colleges, and if effort were made to interest the pupils in such of these bulletins as came within the range of their comprehension, they in turn would interest their parents in them. The result would be that where one is now read in such a community, ten would then be read, and with greater interest and more intelligence. Such a school would also be a center for meetings of farmers for discussion upon agricultural subjects. When a number of such schools were established, professors could be sent out from the agricul-

tural college, going from one to another, remaining a sufficient time at each to give instruction not only to the students, but to farmers who might care to attend, in various subjects which could not be taken up in the school itself. The dairy industry, for instance, would furnish an excellent field for such work. The example of Denmark furnishes an excellent illustration of the value of such traveling professors. The same plan is successfully followed in Germany, and in Ireland, as well as in some other countries.

RELATION OF THE COUNTY SCHOOL OF AGRICULTURE AND DOMESTIC ECONOMY TO THE COUNTY TRAINING SCHOOL FOR TEACHERS.

If such a school could be established in connection with the county training school for teachers, provision could be made for giving instruction to teachers in such phases of the work in agriculture and domestic economy as could profitably be undertaken in the district schools. With such a body of teachers so trained, we might then reasonably expect to secure some of the results which many hope to see coming from the introduction of this subject into the district schools.

Two difficulties present themselves in the carrying out of this plan. One is the absence of specially trained teachers for this work. The other is the absence of text books in which have been formulated the body of knowledge which should be taught. Our agricultural colleges can very readily supply the teaching force as soon as it becomes evident that there will be a demand for such teachers. In the schools first organized the teachers will have to depend upon themselves and upon the books now published through many volumes of which the material to be taught is scattered. Experience will indicate what work can most profitably be done, and with the development of the system, well considered and carefully arranged text books will follow as a matter of course. I believe such a plan as this is a feasible one, that it will command the support of the people most interested, the

farmers. That it will show tangible results early, and that as the system is extended it will awaken the intelligence of the community where the schools may be, and arouse an interest in matters pertaining to farm life which will give us better trained, more successful farmers, as well as better trained men and women, and better citizens.

TRANSPORTATION OF RURAL SCHOOL PUPILS AT PUBLIC EXPENSE.

By PROF. A. A. UPHAM, STATE NORMAL SCHOOL, WHITEWATER, WIS.

Read before the State Teacher's Association.

The decline of the rural school and the consequent need of consolidation have been so recently presented on this platform that time need not be spent in rehearsing the facts. It is well known that not only in Wisconsin but also in other states the migration of population has been towards the cities, so that while at the beginning of the century 96% of the population lived in the country, at the end less than 70% were left.

In the last 35 years the rural population of New York has decreased one-third. Of the 11,000 school districts nearly three thousand, or more than one-fourth, have six pupils or less, and two-thirds have less than 21. Vermont has 153 schools with less than 7 pupils each. Maine has 1,000 with less than 13 pupils each. Wisconsin has 183 with less than 6; 858 others with less than 11; with a total of 3,222 with less than 21 each.

The new conditions demand new adjustments. The adjustment suggested is transportation of rural school pupils at public expense.

It has seemed that it would be most profitable to ascertain what other states are doing and the results of their experiments. To this end, I have solicited information from the State Superintendents of all the states and territories, from many of the County Superintendents and township trustees, from patrons whose children were transported, from the drivers of the teams, from the Principals of the central schools, and from the transported children.

From the reports received it appears that eighteen states have a law allowing the transportation of pupils at public expense, and thirteen are availing themselves of the privilege. The following is list:

| | | |
|--------------|----------------|---------------|
| Connecticut, | Massachusetts, | Ohio, |
| Florida, | Nebraska, | Pennsylvania, |
| Indiana, | New Hampshire, | Rhode Island, |
| Iowa, | New Jersey, | South Dakota, |
| Kansas, | New York, | Vermont, |
| Maine, | North Dakota, | Wisconsin. |

These states have nearly half the population of the United States. Taking the states in alphabetical order, Connecticut is the first state which has a law on the subject.

The law authorizes the school visitors to close small schools and unite them with the schools of adjoining districts. The Connecticut report for 1899 gives the number of schools closed as 84. Number of children transported 849. Approximate cost \$12,000. The children are mostly conveyed the whole distance. Sometimes they gather at the old schoolhouse, or at some convenient point from which the team starts. In some cases all who live more than a mile away, or some other fixed distance, are carried without regard to distance. Sometimes the town owns the vehicle and hires the driver. In one town a sum per day, depending on attendance, was paid to parents. In one town \$20.00 per term, for each family or bunch of children, was allowed and deduction made for absence. It was noticed that the attendance was good in such cases. The expense is less than the cost of maintaining schools. One town expending \$292.00 effects a saving of \$300.00 yearly. The vehicles are covered and made comfortable by blankets and rugs. In all cases emphasis is laid upon the fact that the driver should be selected with much care.

In Connecticut the amount expended runs from \$10.00 per year in the town of Bozrah to \$1,380 in Windham. Ashford pays a family or bunch of children living two or more miles from

school \$20.00 per full term. They pay the same whether the children are carried or not. Under those conditions the children become quite robust and able to walk.

In only one case in Connecticut was the cost increased. The report says: "Transportation is a success."

FLORIDA.

Florida reports two counties instituting the plan of transporting children. From one of these, Citrus, I learn that they are transporting three small schools four to six miles, 20 pupils at \$1.50 per pupil per month. The plan is growing in popular favor and they expect to do more next year. A copy of the notice to bidders specifies a vehicle of sufficient capacity, necessary umbrellas, wraps, etc., to keep the children comfortable, a good and reliable horse, and driver who is trustworthy and who shall have control of all the children—said driver to the B. of P. I., to deliver pupils between 8 and 8:40 and return them, leaving at 4:05, and to give a \$100 bond for the faithful performance of his work. The teacher of the central school is required to make out a monthly report registering the arrival and departure for each day, dates and causes of failure, and if there is any complaint, report it promptly by letter.

Duval Co., Florida, is transporting 176 pupils at \$303 per month, having closed 14 schools. They began with two schools two years ago and the plan has been very popular. Extra teachers hired cost \$145, making a total cost of \$448, for what had before cost \$490 per month, thus saving \$42 per month. Schools of three teachers and 8-year grades were formed. They are planning now to reduce 45 schools to 15. The Superintendent says, "We furnish wagonettes carrying 8, 12, and 16 passengers, so there is no difficulty in getting farmers to furnish teams and harness; this is an improvement over other ways."

INDIANA.

The next state on the list which seems to be doing something is Indiana. From the State Superintendent I received the names

of six township trustees who are transporting children. The work is not yet general enough to have statistical information gathered. From them I received the following information and opinions:—

One trustee from Richmond reports 100 children transported from two to four miles at a cost of \$527.25, or \$5.25 per pupil. This man reports that there was at first opposition to the plan, but that now there is very little.

From Henry Co., Indiana, the "Trustee" of New Lisbon reports: "We insist on the very best hack service that can be had, good wagons with springs, weather-proof top, door at rear and window to admit light, cushioned seats and back; carpet on the floor and four heavy lap robes. Heaters could be used but we have never had occasion to use them. Good teams are essential. All our roads are graveled, and the hacks run on schedule time as closely as a railway train. I make it a point to employ the very best men I can find to drive and care for the children." This man transports about 40 children from two to four miles with two hack lines at \$3.00 a day for both. He reports that there was some opposition at first but almost none now. By this plan two schools costing together \$6.00 per day are dispensed with, so the saving is \$3.00 a day. Four-fifths a cent a mile is the average cost of transportation.

To the patrons of this school I sent the following questions:

1st. Is your property injured by the closing of the school and transporting of the children? Most of the answers are in the negative, but two say the property is injured, though one of these says, "The system of central schools is all O. K. if properly conducted. This is the 8th year for central schools and it has been a success."

2nd. Do the children suffer in health? The answers are invariably, "No."

3rd. Is the close association of children in the carriages worse than when they were scattered along the road? The answers again are mostly, "No." One, a woman, answers that she does not think the close association so bad as along the road, if a

proper person is chosen as a driver. One patron says, "The control of the children has caused us more trouble than anything else," and he suggests that the drivers should make the children behave, and that the first one in should pass to the further end of the carriage, and thus avoid stepping on toes. Perhaps, by the time the plan has been running as long as street cars, this will be done. Reports say some drivers get along very well, others do not. The same may be said of teachers. One thinks they are much better off with some one to look after them.

4th. Does the eating of cold dinners affect the question much? Answer, "No, they ate cold dinners before the schools were consolidated."

5th. Is the all-day absence from home objectionable? Answer, "This is just the same as before."

6th. What else have you to say for or against the plan? Answers to this will be given in the summary.

Other places in Indiana report as follows: Crawfordsville, transporting 10 pupils, saves \$184 annually. In another place two of seven schools have been closed. In another place 20 children are transported for \$1.45 per day. Another reports the cost of transporting 10 children two miles, \$96 for a term of six months, one-half cent a mile for the distance actually conveyed. One driver reports that he makes a 15-mile trip daily and finds no difficulty in managing the children.

IOWA.

The school law of Iowa authorizes the contracting with other townships or independent districts for the instruction of children who are at an unreasonable distance from their own school; and where there will be a saving of expense, or increased advantage to the children, the board may arrange for transportation of any child to and from school.

In Winnebago Co. the plan is conducted on the largest scale of any Iowa place.

Number of children conveyed, 49.

Distance two and one-half to five and one-half miles.

Number of teams used, 4.

Cost of team and driver, \$25.00 per month.

Number of schools closed, 4; six next year.

Plan has been in operation three years.

Estimated saving, \$486.00 per year.

Two-thirds cent a mile.

Forest City transports 15 pupils at \$1.50 each per month, an average distance of 4 miles—cost three-tenths cent per mile.

Baldwin, Iowa, transports twelve pupils one and one-half miles at an estimated saving of \$11 per month. "Pupils meet at the old schoolhouse, and are left at the old schoolhouse at night. If pupil is not on time he is left. Only one has been left and he has not missed twice. Result is, pupils are never tardy and attendance is very regular. There is plenty of room for pupils in town so there is no extra expense except transportation." As far as the State Superintendent knows, citizens, teachers and pupils are pleased.

There are in Iowa 233 districts or sub-districts maintaining schools with an average attendance of less than 6, and 2,500 with less than 11. Fifty-three per cent. of the independent and 78% of the subdistricts have 20 or less. Three-fifths of the pupils are in ungraded schools.

KANSAS.

The last Legislature of Kansas passed a law providing that where pupils reside three or more miles from the schoolhouse, district boards shall pay to the parent or guardian of such children a sum not to exceed 15 cts. per day, for a period of not more than 100 days, for conveying such pupils to and from school. A fresh inquiry within two weeks failed to elicit information that advantage is being taken of this law.

State Superintendent J. V. Calhoun of Louisiana says: "We are advanced only so far as talking about consolidation of rural schools and transportation of pupils. We are doing something but we need to convince and then find funds."

MAINE.

In Maine the committee may transport or pay the board of pupils at a suitable place near any established school. Maine has 1,000 schools averaging less than 13 pupils each. "The fact that school districts have been abolished or that the school committee has suspended schools does not necessarily entitle public school children to conveyance."

MASSACHUSETTS.

The condition of the rural schools and the matter of transportation in Massachusetts is the subject of a special report by G. T. Fletcher, agent of the Massachusetts Board of Education. From this we learn that Massachusetts enacted a law in 1869 providing for the conveyance of pupils to and from public schools. The first town to take advantage of this was Quincy—closing two schools in 1874.

In 1889 Agent G. A. Walton found that the cost of educating pupils in some *small* schools was \$50 each, while in schools of 25 pupils, the cost was \$10.00 each.

The growth of conveyance in Massachusetts is shown by the increased expenditure, \$22,000 in 188-99; \$30,000 in 1890-91; \$50,000 in 1892-93; \$91,000 in 1895-96; \$123,000 in 1897-98, and \$124,409 in 1898-99.

To ascertain the state of feeling in Massachusetts, Agent Fletcher in preparing his report sent circulars of inquiry to each city and town in the state. About 200 replies were received, representing about all the different conditions. From this report I select a few points. More than 50% of the towns report changes in population affecting school conditions.

One town reports cost of schooling in small school \$46.82 per year, \$16.30 in central building. One district formerly had 60 to 80 pupils, now 13. Many towns have gained in the villages as much as they have lost in the country. "Within ten years 229 towns have practically abandoned the old fashioned district school and in its place have established central graded schools

One Superintendent reports favorable results after 18 years of trial. Less sickness among transported children, and a saving of \$600 annually. Sixty per cent. of the towns raise money by specific appropriation, separate from the regular school fund; 40 per cent. make the regular school tax cover the cost of conveyance. "Fifty per cent. convey the whole distance, in the other towns the children walk to some designated point, except in some cases the carriage goes to each home in stormy weather. In some cases conveyance is furnished only in winter or stormy weather. Sometimes the children are conveyed *to* school but not *from* it except in stormy weather."

As to what is to be construed as a reasonable distance there is much difference of opinion. Age, strength, sex, nature of the road, amount of money, and disposition of the committee seem to be determining factors.

The weight of opinion in the Massachusetts report is decidedly in favor of consolidation and transportation. Frank A. Hill, Secretary of the Mass. Board of Education, in a letter dated Nov. 15th says: "The increase from \$22,000 ten years ago to \$127,000 at the present time measures, I think, in a trustworthy way the growth of the policy of consolidating public schools in our rural towns and transporting children to stronger central schools."

NEBRASKA.

Nebraska has a law and is working under it in several places, notably, Fremont and Lincoln. One district reports a saving of \$70 a month.

In addition to the law providing for transportation, Nebraska provides that a district may contract with a neighboring district for instruction of pupils and may transport its pupils to such district without forfeiting its right to share in the state apportionment of school fund. The State Superintendent says: "Best of all is, the pupils are better taught."

NEW YORK.

New York has a law and last year annulled 82 districts. Two hundred contracts have been filed during the present year, and State Supt. Skinner thinks 300 will be, before the year is over. Pupils conveyed are not enumerated separately, so there are no statistics showing number of pupils conveyed. Contracts were first made in 1896. Twenty-seven in all. The increase to over 200 this year shows the system to be very popular wherever tried.

NORTH DAKOTA.

North Dakota has a law, first in operation last July, that pupils two and one-half miles away may be transported.

OHIO.

One of the most noted examples is found in Kingsville, Ohio, a report of which was published in the *Arena* for July, 1889. The Kingsville experiment was made possible by a special act of the legislature passed for the benefit of this one town. This bill enacted that any township which by the census of 1890 had a population of not less than 1,710, nor more than 1,715, might appropriate funds for the conveyance of pupils in subdistricts. The law was based specifically upon the rate of population of Kingsville and was so worded to gain the support of legislators from other sections of the state, who were attached to the old plan, but who would not object to the object lesson. The residents of Kingsville have realized all their fondest hopes. The average attendance has much increased and better schools have been provided. Fifty pupils have been conveyed, and the annual cost of tuition has been reduced from \$22.75 to \$12.25 per pupil. The plan enabled the Kingsville school to open a new room and supply another teacher to the central school, thus reducing the number of grades in a room. The daily attendance has increased from 50 to 90 per cent., thus increasing the return from the school fund invested. Over a thousand dollars was saved in Kingsville in three years.

The law has since been made general in Ohio and is everywhere proving satisfactory. Other townships in Ohio have followed the lead of Kingsville. One county, Madison, reports a decrease of tuition from \$16.00 per year to \$10.48 on basis of total enrollment, and from \$26.06 to \$16.07 on the basis of average attendance. But the item of cost is not the most important. The larger attendance, more regular attendance, better school-houses, better teachers, and the greater interest and enthusiasm that numbers bring are most important.

In another Ohio place, circles are drawn around the school-house one mile and two miles distant. Pupils inside the first circle get themselves to school. Pupils between the two circles receive \$1.00 per month, and pupils outside the two-mile circle receive \$3.00 per month, and furnish their own transportation.

PENNSYLVANIA.

Pennsylvania has a law providing that transportation may be done at a cost not exceeding the cost before closing the school.

RHODE ISLAND.

Rhode Island has a law, and is transporting. Emphasis is here laid upon the increased attendance; two schools having graduated ten pupils together in two years, and after consolidation, 16 pupils in one year, an increase of over 300 per cent. in the number of those who remained through the upper grades.

SOUTH DAKOTA.

South Dakota has a law, and many are about convinced that where pupils live three or four miles they could have better schools at less cost. I was informed that transportation has been begun but have been unable to learn particulars or localities.

VERMONT.

In Vermont, on a written application from ten resident taxpayers of the town a portion of the school money not exceeding 25% may be used to transport scholars, where residence is one and

one-half miles or more from the schoolhouse. The popularity of the movement may be judged from the State Superintendent's report that "Within the past ten years the amount expended for transportation has increased 400 per cent."

WISCONSIN.

Wisconsin has a law that permits the use of school money to transport pupils living more than a mile and a half from school, by the nearest travelled road. But so far as I can learn there is no organized transportation of pupils, though I understand three counties are contemplating it, viz., Kewaunee, Dane, and Rock.

FOREIGN.

But not alone in this country is this consolidation of schools and conveyance being inaugurated. In Victoria, Australia, 241 schools were last year closed, making a saving of 14,170 pounds per annum. The attendance is so regular and the system so popular that applications are constantly made for its extension. A reasonable excuse in Victoria for non-attendance upon public school is that the distance is—

Two miles for a 9-year-old child,

Two and one-half miles for 9 to 12-year-old child, and

Three miles for a child over 12 years of age.

Victoria is a little larger than Wisconsin, with about half its population, one-half of which is rural.

SUMMARY.

From the reports, both printed and written, I gather the following summary of advantages accruing from the plan of transportation of rural school children at public expense:

1. The health of the children is better, the children being less exposed to stormy weather, and avoiding sitting in damp clothing.

2. Attendance is from 50 to 150 per cent. greater, more regular, and of longer continuance, and there is neither tardiness nor truancy.

3. Fewer teachers are required, so better teachers may be secured and better wages paid.

4. Pupils work in graded schools and both teachers and pupils are under systematic and closer supervision.

5. Pupils are in better schoolhouses, where there is better heating, lighting, and ventilation, and more appliances of all kinds.

6. Better opportunity is afforded for special work in music, drawing, &c.

7. Cost in early all cases is reduced. Under this is included cost and maintenance of school buildings, apparatus, furniture and tuition.

8. School year is often much longer.

9. Pupils are benefited by widened circle of acquaintance and the culture resulting therefrom.

10. The whole community is drawn together.

11. Public barges used for children in the daytime may be used to transport their parents to public gatherings in the evenings, to lecture courses, etc.

12. Transportation makes possible the distribution of mail throughout the whole township daily.

13. Finally, by transportation the farm again as of old becomes the ideal place in which to bring up children, enabling them to secure the advantages of centers of population and spend their evenings and holiday time in the country in contact with nature and plenty of work, instead of idly loafing about town.

We are in the midst of an industrial revolution. The principle of concentration has touched our farming, our manufacturing, our mining, and our commerce. There are those who greatly fear the outcome. There were those who prophesied disaster and even the destruction of society on the introduction of labor saving machinery. We have adjusted ourselves to the new conditions thus introduced. Most of us believe that we shall

again adjust ourselves to the new industrial conditions. The changes in industrial and social conditions make necessary similar changes in educational affairs. The watchword of today's concentration, the dominant force is centripetal. Not only for the saving of expense but for the better quality of the work must we bring our pupils together. No manufacturing business could endure a year run on a plan so extravagant as the district system of little schools. The question for us to decide is, Shall Wisconsin lag behind, or shall she remember the motto on her escutcheon, "Forward"?





**A Study
of
Waste
and
Kindred
Evils**

**Existing in the Administration of
Our Public Schools**

**By the State
Superintendent
of
Public Schools
of Maine**

Kennebec Journal Print.

STATE OF MAINE.

EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT, }
AUGUSTA, July 1, 1897. }

The department is prepared to send copies of this pamphlet on application to persons interested in educational matters.

W. W. STETSON,
State Superintendent of Public Schools.

WASTE.

Any one who is familiar with old time home life in Maine is aware that much of the sturdiness and enterprise which characterized the youth of former generations was due to the habits of thrift which they were obliged to practice. These habits of prudence in the management of the affairs of the home and the expenditure of money tended to sharpen and invigorate these boys and girls. These experiences were of infinite value to the people of Maine, physically, mentally and morally. These efforts made them thoughtful, helpful, vigorous and progressive. No community can afford to lose the advantages which come from such living. The degeneration of a people dates from the time when they become careless in the expenditure of money, reckless in the care of property and thoughtless in the use of opportunities.

If one does not give a fair equivalent for what he receives he is guilty of an offence which will show itself in his character. People must continue to buy with wise economy, use with careful prudence, and hold in high esteem those who are careful in the handling of public funds, and are unwilling to receive the same without rendering a full equivalent.

It is as true of schools as of any other department of activity that the least profitable labor is performed by untrained workmen; and that the next most expensive service is rendered by persons who are not paid for what they do. These two facts go a long way toward explaining why so many thoughtful persons are disappointed that no larger return is made for the vast sums which are expended in maintaining the public schools of Maine. But few people are aware that there was expended to maintain the public schools of the State during the school year of 1894-5 the sum of \$1,766,323.07,* which gives an average of \$555 for each school, provided they were so arranged as to

*It is necessary to estimate some of the items included in this total, as the returns do not give the exact figures.

average thirty pupils each. This is an amount large enough, if properly expended, to furnish every child in the State with an opportunity to be instructed by a competent teacher for thirty weeks during each year, and also to furnish a high school in every town of the State of more than twelve hundred inhabitants, and to pay for one, and in many instances two terms of high school in the smaller towns. After paying all the expenses connected with maintaining these schools there would be a balance remaining large enough to provide competent superintendents for all the schools of the State if arrangements were made to place thirty-five or forty schools in the charge of each superintendent. These statements are made after a careful estimate of what it would cost to secure trained teachers, maintain free high schools of a standard grade, and furnish skilled superintendence.

It may be of some interest to make a careful study of the money expended and the schools maintained in one of the smaller towns of the State. The town selected is one whose financial condition does not warrant it in being lavish in its expenditures in any direction. It has a population of a little less than one thousand inhabitants. It expends for school purposes, on an average, \$1,880 a year. This sum includes the amount paid for teachers, fuel, books, supplies, repairs, superintendence and transportation of pupils. The inhabitants are so distributed in the town that it would be convenient to have all the children accommodated in three schools. It is supporting, at the present time, more than three times this number. If the children were assembled in three schools there would be in each an average attendance of about thirty pupils. If the schools were maintained for thirty weeks and the teachers were paid \$12.50 a week, the salaries of the teachers would amount to \$1,125. A liberal allowance is made for the following items when \$45 are allowed for fuel, \$60 for books, \$40 for supplies, \$75 for repairs, \$120 for superintendence, \$200 for transportation and \$40 for libraries and apparatus, making a total expenditure for one year of \$1,705, leaving a balance of \$175 unexpended. If this sum were used to maintain a free high school, and the town received from the State, as it would be entitled to, an equal amount, it could spend for this purpose \$350 a year,

which would give the town a high school for two terms of ten weeks each, and pay the instructor of the same a salary of \$70 a month.

This town has not maintained a free high school for some years because its citizens felt they could not maintain a school of this grade. The town has no villages, no wealthy citizens, no industries except farming, and a few country stores, and in no sense can be considered especially prosperous. It is hardly an average rural town of a rural section of the State. The people, as has already been stated, are engaged in farming, are able to provide themselves with fairly comfortable homes, and have an interest in giving their children a common school education. The amount raised for schools is the amount required by law. The amount expended for books, supplies, repairs and superintendence is the smallest sum the demands in these directions will warrant.

This example of what is done and what might be done has been given to show that we do not need to raise more money to maintain public schools of a standard grade, but we need a more intelligent expenditure of the funds used for this purpose.

It will be noted that in the items of expense there is provision for \$120 for superintendence, and that there are only three schools in the town to be superintended. The allowance made above gives a superintendent \$40 for superintending each school. If he is employed by a group of towns, and has thirty schools under his care, and each town pays him in the above ratio, he will receive \$1,200 a year for his services. This is a salary large enough to insure the employment of a person of good scholastic attainments, and of some experience as a teacher.

When we reach a point in our school administration where we put into the work the thought, intelligence, and economy the average business man puts into his business, then we shall have schools taught by efficient teachers, and superintended by competent officials. When this day comes the communities, towns and State will receive a far greater return for the large sums spent for schools than is possible under the present want of system.

It will be seen from the above that the plea is not for more money, but for a wiser expenditure of the funds devoted to

maintaining public schools. The time has come when the citizens of our State who believe in the public schools should take this matter in hand and see that such changes are inaugurated as will insure an intelligent management of the schools along financial and professional lines.

Such information has been gained through personal inspection, reports of superintendents and testimony from private sources that the department is warranted in stating definitely what improvements should be made in the condition of the school yards, outhouses and school-buildings of the State. It is to be understood that when statements are made which indicate a deplorable condition of affairs in these several particulars they apply only to a certain per cent. of the schools; but it will be seen from these returns that this per cent. is so large that it is impossible for the schools to do the work which is expected of them while they remain in their present condition.

The squandering of school funds has reached proportions which are appalling to persons who have made a study of these questions. There is but one explanation for the difference which exists between what is and what might be. That explanation is found in the single word, "Waste."

In a number of communities in Maine but little effort is made to secure a lot which is large enough; or has the right kind of soil; or is provided with suitable drainage; or is favorably located.

The fences which surround these lots are built in a primitive, unsubstantial and unserviceable manner, and either have to be renewed frequently, or become unsightly objects.

The outhouses are simply rough board shells, with ill-fitting doors, sometimes held in place by one hinge, and sometimes even wanting in this means of attachment to the building, being put in place by each user of the hovel. As a rule these buildings are not provided with vaults, and the spaces beneath the sittings are not cleaned, and no precautions are taken to protect the morals, the manners or the health of the persons who are compelled, by necessity, to use them. Many of these buildings are rendered still more hideous by obscene drawings, and terribly repulsive by the accumulated filth of years of abuse.

In the construction of the school-buildings which disfigure these plots of ground no intelligent effort has been made to

have them built according to architectural principles or in compliance with the laws of hygiene. An open space is surrounded by a frame, and supported on posts or poorly constructed piers. This frame is boarded and in most cases it is clapboarded or shingled. The interior is finished in the cheapest lumber the market affords, or these areas are covered with plaster that soon drops from the walls and ceiling.

The extent of the waste and pollution resulting from such conditions cannot be estimated in figures or stated in words. They are sources of degradation to the children who use them, and teachers are hampered and discouraged by being placed in such disgraceful surroundings.

No effort is put forth to make use of the knowledge and experience of others. More money is expended in the construction of the building than need be if the work were placed in competent hands. When the building is finished it is a discredit to the builders, a source of torture and discomfort to pupils and teachers, and an eye sore to the community in which it is located. The yard is ungraded. The outhouses are improperly located and poorly built, and the schoolhouse is dropped down at the point that happens to strike the fancy of a person who has not given its location a moment's thought. A little study and consultation with experts would have secured a lot of large area in a suitable location at small cost, put its surface in presentable condition, and built outhouses and a schoolhouse which would be largely influential in the best training of those who use them during their school and teaching days.

There can be no question but that from a purely financial standpoint, it pays and pays handsomely to employ the highest intelligence and the soundest judgment to take charge of the construction and care of school-buildings. When these conditions obtain we shall be saving money along the lines in which we have been unintelligently economical.

Inquiry and observation have made it quite clear that it is not an unusual practice to pay the highest market price for everything purchased for the school in the way of supplies, books, fuel and repairs. One instance is reported where a person charged two dollars for a trip to town to get

a pane of glass. His charge for the glass and setting the same was twenty-five cents. The case cited is unusual in the extent of its flagrancy, but not exceptional as indicating the ways in which money is wasted by certain officials. A study of the fuel question reveals the fact that school officials in a number of towns have paid more for wood delivered at the schoolhouse than the same commodity was worth in the nearest market town. In not a few of the towns there is a lamentable laxness in the measurement of wood furnished for the schools, and an acceptance of a quality that would not pass inspection even in the least critical markets.

In making repairs more time and money are expended in making the examination, getting the material and finding some one to do the work than is paid for the material and labor.

Such loose methods of conducting business affairs, such total absence of economy in the expenditure of a million and three quarters of money can but result in an enormous waste of the funds appropriated by a generous people for the maintenance of schools and the care of school property.

It would be wise economy for each town to select some competent person to examine carefully its public buildings at stated times, report in writing to some board its findings, and then make needed additions and repairs under its direction and inspection. When this work is placed in the hands of a skillful and honest person then we shall have graded school yards, suitable outhouses, and schoolhouses which will be an ornament to the communities of the State, and a means of blessing to those who use them. Until this plan is adopted no substantial improvement will be made along these lines.

There is, however, one particular in which school officials are economical to the point of the most reckless extravagance. The practice of employing the teacher who will work for the smallest sum has been carried to such a point as to render a considerable portion of the amount paid for these services practically valueless. Personal observation reveals the fact that a certain number of schools of the State are in charge of persons so unfit for the positions they hold as to be not only of no service to those placed under their charge, but to work a positive injury to the children, because they assist in the forma-

tion of vicious habits, the growth of mischievous ideas and the dwarfing of the student spirit in the children. It is vastly better for the children to be at home, engaged in profitable labor, than to be in a school conducted by a teacher who has not the scholarship, aptitudes, training and personality which fit her not only to direct and assist the children in their studies, but also to inspire them with a desire to learn for the sake of the power which learning gives. Great as is the waste in connection with the property interests of the schools, it is as nothing compared with the greater waste resulting from the employment of unfit and misfit teachers.

The patrons of the public schools of to-day have but little of the interest in and sympathy for the public school that the parents in the olden time had for this institution. They do not visit the schools; they, therefore, cannot study them. They do not know the teacher; they are not familiar with the work done, the methods used, or the results achieved. They are content with voting money for school purposes, and leaving the school officers to select lots, erect buildings, provide furnishings and employ teachers. Good schools can never be maintained in any community in which the parents are indifferent about what is done for the schools and how they do their work. They must have an intelligent concern and a continuing interest in the property plant of the school, the employment of teachers, the studies pursued, the methods used, and the work done. If this sympathy, thought and interest exist they will show themselves by the presence of the parents in the schoolroom. They will know the teacher personally and professionally. They will know her antecedents, her attainments and general fitness for the work. They will restrain the quick tongue and withhold the harsh word. They will not interfere with the management, discipline, and work of the school, or rashly criticise the teacher or her work. Instead, they will be sympathetic, responsive and helpful. Parents realize to a very limited extent the fearful havoc they are making in the schools and to what terrible waste they are subjecting these agencies by interfering with the work of the teacher, refusing to send their children to school regularly, and failing to instill into the minds of the children a

respect for the school, the teacher, school officials and lawful authority. A larger per cent. of the money appropriated for school purposes in Maine is worse than wasted because of these causes than is realized even by those who are directly connected with the work of the schools.

General comment and almost universal practice have led pupils to feel that they are not in school to yield obedience to lawful authority, to have a just respect and wholesome regard for the teacher, to comply with the rules and regulations made by school officials, and to master, by their own efforts, the work assigned them. But, instead, many children feel that they are sent to school to be amused; that it is a part of their legitimate business to criticise the teacher, report what she does or they think she does, and what she says or they think she says, to comment upon the same, and to have the work which is given them to do put in so attractive and understandable form that they can master it by simply nodding acceptance to its tender. They waste their energy, pervert their lives, contract bad habits, come to be influenced by unworthy and unwholesome motives, and become selfish in feeling and action, and enfeebled in mind and body. When one realizes that there are 135,598 children enrolled in the schools of Maine at the present time, then does he begin to understand the terrible waste that is being made by these same young people. They fail to appreciate the purpose for which they are in school, what their attitude toward the school should be, what work they should do while in school, and what purpose the school is to serve in their life and development.

Statistics elsewhere published by this department make it altogether too plain that a considerable number of the persons who compose the school committees of the State of Maine have friends, relatives, or associates in business, whom they wish to see in the schools as teachers. It is altogether too clear that the average rural school is used as a means of rewarding friends, helping relatives and paying political and other debts. It is charged, and the charge seems to be supported by not a little evidence, that some men are ambitious to be elected members of school boards for the purpose of controlling the election of the teachers in their schools. One cannot too strongly con-

demn such practices. The State and the town have a right to demand that the money appropriated for school purposes shall be disbursed in such a way as to yield the largest possible returns. Such returns cannot be forthcoming unless teachers, competent in every way, are placed in charge of the schools. The people cannot be assured that the teachers possess this competency unless such means are used to ascertain their fitness as will place the matter beyond all controversy.

It is feared that some members of school committees feel that they have discharged all the duties devolving upon them when they have made the necessary arrangements for the election of certain persons as teachers. It is important that the control of the schools be, as far as possible, in the hands of the local authorities. It is still more important that such safeguards be placed around the schools as will make it impossible for incompetent teachers to be placed in the schoolroom. Such superintendence must be provided as will induce superintending school committees to attend to the proper keeping of accounts, the suitable care of school property and the economical expenditure of school-funds.

The average amount expended for text-books in this State for five years is \$91,366, making an average expenditure for each child for each year of ninety-four cents. There is, at least, one city in the State which has been able to supply the pupils in its schools with the necessary text-books for five years at an average of less than thirty-two cents a pupil a year. The margin between thirty-two cents and ninety-four cents is too large. Any one who is acquainted with the number of books furnished the pupils in the common schools is aware that the schools are not supplied with as many books as are needed. If all the above statements are true then it necessarily follows that the money used for this purpose is not expended with the care which the ordinary business man uses in the purchase of the material needed in his business. If the amount expended in the city referred to above were doubled there would still be left thirty cents of an excess when we compare the average amount expended with the amount thus allowed.

In most of the rural schools superintendents, or superintending school committees continue the practice of buying expen-

sive fourth, fifth and sixth readers, a large number of complete geographies, and an equally large number of complete arithmetics. A great saving might be made in these particulars if these officials would make a careful examination of the books furnished by many of our best publishing houses for supplementary work in all the branches mentioned above. These supplementary books are vastly superior to the regular text-books, and in most cases are furnished at about one-third the cost of the regular texts.

If school officials were willing to make a careful study of the needs of their schools, a still more careful study of the books which may be purchased to meet these needs, the amount expended for text-books could be materially reduced. To do these things one must be something of an expert in these matters, and be paid for the service he renders. If this matter were handled in the way in which it should be, there would be enough saved in this one item to go a long way toward paying for skillful superintendence.

But even admitting that it is best to buy the regular text-books, and that it is necessary to buy them in the numbers purchased, there still remains one particular in which a waste is permitted that makes the expense account in the matter of text-books, at least, one-third larger than it should be. Books are mutilated and abused by the pupils. No effort is made to compel the persons guilty of these destructive practices to replace the injured books. In but few schools are bookcases provided and proper efforts made to have the books labeled and suitably cared for when not in use during term time and during vacations. If school officials would put a little time into instructing their teachers how the books are to be cared for, in seeing that they are properly labelled, that when a book is injured it is paid for, and if they would provide a suitable case for the books and insist that they be placed in the same, a saving could be made which would aggregate a large sum for the whole State.

Superintendents should exercise the most scrupulous economy in the purchase of all material used in the schools, all repairs made upon school property, in a word, all expenditures made by the town for school purposes. If a few towns would

make an experiment in this direction the results would be of such conspicuous financial advantage that all towns would soon follow their example.

It is not intended that anything which is said in this connection shall imply, directly or indirectly, that superintendents or members of the superintending school committees, are guilty of dishonesty in handling school funds. It must be peculiarly encouraging to every citizen of the State to know that the most careful examination of this whole question has revealed only a small number of superintendents who are disposed to use school money in any way, or for any purpose not provided for in the statutes.

As some one may get the idea from the foregoing remarks that it is only in the school department of each town that there is an unintelligent expenditure of funds it seems wise to make the following statements. In a certain town of the State there has been spent during the past ten years considerably over two hundred thousand dollars for the purpose of maintaining the roads of that municipality. The following sentence from a well-known citizen of the town will indicate, with sufficient definiteness, the success which has attended these labors. He said: "There is not a piece of road in this town of any considerable length where a person can drive a horse at the rate of twelve miles an hour without endangering his own life, ruining the animal driven and wrecking the carriage used." This simple statement shows that there are other departments beside the school department that stand in need of more intelligent and more economical expenditure of money.

DOES IT PAY TO EDUCATE CHILDREN?

No one can visit the shire-towns of our counties, and make careful observations of the county buildings and grounds without being impressed with the fact that a large amount of money and unusual intelligence have been used in the construction and care of these plants. The grounds are beautifully laid out, handsomely graded, and the lawns would make the heart of an English nobleman swell with pride. They are ornamented with trees and in their areas are found attractive beds of cultivated flowers. The buildings are constructed of the best material the market affords, are erected according to plans prepared by experts, and are not only serviceable for the purposes for which they are used, but are architectural ornaments in the communities in which they are located.

No person who is connected with the public schools will for a moment criticise the action of county commissioners in making these ample and attractive provisions for the transaction of the business of the county, and for the custody and care of the criminals who come under their charge. The people who have made the most careful study of all these questions have found that it pays in every sense in which the best things pay to have public buildings not only constructed of the best material and according to plans approved by experts and located on favorable sites, but that they should also be supplied with the best conveniences and apparatus the ingenuity of the age has devised. Every lover of the public schools must rejoice that we have in the State so many county buildings that are substantial and beautiful structures; that our criminal classes are placed in institutions and surrounded by conditions which will assist them to better ideas of living, and it is hoped to better ideas of life.

Any one who travels through the State must be impressed with the fact that a considerable number of the most intelligent breeders of stock have expended large sums in providing suitable buildings and surroundings for the stock they

are rearing. These men are among our most level headed and progressive citizens. They appreciate the value of blood; they understand the value of suitable housings for their stock; they believe in providing the service which experts can give, and are willing to pay out their money lavishly for these things. It is a matter of common knowledge that an expert has been paid \$2,000 a year for training colts, with the hope that he would be able to send them down the track at a speed that would shrink the famous Rigby record. These men have made a careful study of the breeding and care of animals and of the methods used by others in the training of race horses. They are engaged in these enterprises for financial purposes. They believe that expert service is the most profitable service for them.

When one contrasts the buildings furnished for the pet stock of the State, and the trainers who train them, with many of our school premises and some of our school teachers, the comparison is not peculiarly gratifying to one who believes that boys and girls are quite as valuable as blooded stock. Is it true that the State of Maine, that the descendants of the Pilgrims and the Puritans, are willing to pay \$2,000 a year for the training of a favorite horse, and are satisfied to pay from \$3 to \$10 a week for a woman to educate their boys and girls?

No lover of his kind can derive much comfort from the fact that the grounds and buildings provided for our criminals are incomparably more comfortable and attractive than a large proportion of our schoolhouses. Can we continue to be proud of such a record?

It would be a misfortune to have the business men of the State do less in the direction of developing blooded stock and of utilizing the natural resources of the State; but it is hoped that in the effort which is being made to give the State a fair record along industrial lines, the schools and the children will not be so entirely relegated to the background that they will cease to receive the consideration of our business and professional men,—the men who have in their hands the moulding of the State.

It is for the financial interest of every owner of property, of every toiler with his hands to furnish the children with such physical surroundings, such moral atmosphere, such mental

training, such aesthetic opportunities as will permit them to take as worthy a place in the work of the world as the citizens of Maine have been famous for filling in the years that are past.

Any one who has made a careful study of this whole question must be impressed with the serious fact that every one who has any financial interests at all has a financial interest in the education of every boy and girl in the State. One does not need to study statistics very much to be aware of the fact that the value of the person depends largely upon the quality of his education. When one realizes the small sum which is received for manual labor in Asia and Russia as compared with the sum paid for a similar service in this country, and particularly in Massachusetts, then does he appreciate the fact that it pays in dollars and cents to educate all the citizens of the State. Where ignorance abounds there the people are not only unfit to render a service of value, but are content to use but little of what the most intelligent and skillful members of the community are producing.

The centers of population draw most of their increase in inhabitants from the rural sections of the country. The value of this increment is measured by the educational qualifications of the incomer. If he is ignorant he is willing to live in a primitive, rude way. If he has been trained intellectually he is not content with the bare necessities of life. This broader training breeds in him the desire for a home of which he is the owner. He is ambitious to have it furnished with the conveniences, and to some extent, with the luxuries of our modern civilization. He asks that his food, clothing, and opportunities for improvement shall be such as will enable him to get some of the best things the world is prepared to give.

The cities have a double interest in the intellectual training of all the people. If the people are educated those who come into these communities are more valuable citizens, use more of the articles there manufactured and sold, and render a service of the greatest value to these centers. If they are educated and remain upon the farms the same conditions are true, and the same materials have to be supplied. If, on the other hand, they are ignorant, they need but little in whatever place they may cast their lot. Needing but little, they consume but

little of what the manufacturer produces and the merchant sells. Cities must depend for their prosperity upon the intelligence of their inhabitants, and of those who are dependent upon these towns because of their geographical relations to them. If one cared to use a figure of speech he would not be straining a metaphor were he to say that ignorance gives us the blackness of darkness of Africa, the night of Asia, the twilight of Russia; that education gives us the sunrise of glory of the United States, and the approaching meridian light of the most favored localities in New England.

No one can study this question with a desire to learn what the facts are without realizing that it is one of those cases where if we are desirous of a large return we must be willing to make a liberal investment; and that if the whole State is willing to provide for the education of the whole people the whole State will reap the reward of such effort. There is no section of the State which has so large a financial interest, so vital a financial connection with this question and will reap so large a financial return for the investment made as the cities of the State.

Whatever adds to the general intelligence adds to the general prosperity. Whatever adds to the general prosperity accrues directly not only to the benefit of the man who toils with his hands and brings forth the treasures of the earth, but in equal measure to the man who manufactures the product and the man who distributes it to all users of the same.

This is a question in which every citizen, rich or poor, learned or ignorant, exalted or humble has an equal interest, because whatever develops intellectual power increases knowledge, adds wisdom, gives larger views of life, better conceptions of citizenship, broader visions of duty, and in the end means financial prosperity and material growth to the communities which have intelligence enough to assume the responsibility of placing each citizen in such a position that he can make the most of the best in him.

SOME CHANGES THAT MUST MODIFY MEANS USED.

When we compare the condition of the common school of to-day with the school of fifty years ago we must not forget that certain changes have taken place which materially modify the means which can be used to improve the schools of the present. In the olden time the teacher taught not only the children who attended his school, but also the community as well. He was an oracle as well as a teacher. He was a student in the old sense of the word, and a scholar in the best sense of the term. He was thoughtful, studious and devoted to his work. He was judicious in conduct, deliberate of speech, controlling in influence. Many of these things are not true of some of the teachers of to-day, and in studying this question it is well to bear these facts in mind, and in instituting reforms one must not fail to consider carefully the means which can be used while he is deciding upon the work to be done.

In the old-time school the pupils were of all ages from four years to more than twenty-one. They studied all subjects from the spelling book to, and including, higher mathematics. To quite an extent each pupil was permitted to go his own way, study the subjects he chose, and pursue them as far and as fast as his inclinations and abilities would permit. There was but little of what is known in the present day as recitations, with the exception of certain work in reading, spelling, and the historic parsing class. In mathematics the student was told to take as much for a lesson as he could master, and call for assistance when he needed it, and to report once a day. The large attendance, the almost limitless number of classes made it impossible for the teacher to do much in the way of individual instruction. He kept the school in order, compelled the pupils to attend to their studies, and limited his efforts to giving directions, making suggestions and furnishing some assistance in the way of explanations. He strove to stimulate his boys and girls to

make the best use of the short time allowed them for attendance upon the district school.

Within fifty years changes which are hardly less than a revolution have taken place in the rural schools of Maine. The old time schoolhouse has fallen into decay and has been abandoned. The old time schoolmaster and schoolmistress have gone to that bourne from which no pedagogical traveler has ever returned. The boys and girls who crowded the schoolrooms have not only disappeared, but their places are not filled by their descendants or successors. The old time school yard with its brambles, bushes, weeds, and decaying grass is still found in some localities. The tumbled down shanty of an outhouse is still in evidence in some school yards. The barren, battered and stained walls are still used in some communities to inclose, if not to protect the youth of the land who are seeking for knowledge. But at the teachers' desks there are found not a few who have received all their education in the same kind of school as the one they are "keeping," and who cannot, because of a want of experience, lack of education, and absence of the quality that comes from mature years, do the service for the children that was rendered by the old time teachers.

In the pupils' seats are found but few children over thirteen years of age, and many of them are not specially eager to study, not particularly interested in learning, and not generally willing to work out their own intellectual salvation with fear and trembling.

It is to be regretted beyond all possible expression that we have lost the strong features of the old time school; the maturity, the dignity, the manhood and womanhood of the teachers, the presence of older students who furnished examples and inspiration for the younger, the eagerness, the alertness, the anxiety of the boys and girls to be something, to accomplish something. Those who are leaving our public schools to-day are wanting in energy, endurance and ability to stand alone and do by themselves worthy work. They have been freed from cares, relieved of responsibilities; they have had their work done for them, their intellectual pabulum masticated for them so long that they have become incapable of even assimilating elaborately prepared intellectual food. It is noted and

commented upon by school officials and business and professional men that the young people who come to them in these days are wanting in those strong, rugged, masterful qualities which have made such a splendid record for the men and women who went out from the homes and the old red schoolhouses of the Pine Tree State.

In the olden time one of the deities devoutly worshiped in our best homes was the god of "Get On." It was the admonition of the father, the inspiring influence of the mother that made the boys and girls of the past anxious to know, to be, to win not only position, station and wealth, but success in a large and worthy sense. All the members of the family, from the grandfather with his bowed form, to the wee toddler just shedding his skirts, seemed to be imbued with the feeling that each must stimulate the other, that all must work together, and that if a path were to be made for each it must be hewn out through an untrodden area by the efforts of the one who was to walk in it, aided by the sympathy of those who were making ways for themselves. But in these days we hear so often as to be sickened by the reiteration the sentence, "I do not want my boys and girls to work as I had to work, to pass through the experiences I had to pass through, to be required to struggle as I have struggled, drudge as I have drudged, and submit to the privations I have endured. I want their lives to be easy and filled with sunshine." One cannot have too much sympathy, too much respect, for him who desires to minimize the hardships of another's life. But there is one stern lesson which parents as well as children must learn, and it is that experience cannot be acquired by proxy. One must do his own work and develop his own strength.

It has taken six thousand years for the world to reach its present vantage ground. The best thing it has gained from the long years of its pilgrimage is the strength that has come from the struggle, the endeavor, the experiences, the race has passed through on its journey from the beginning to the present. Parents and children must come to a realizing sense of the important fact that children must have cares, responsibilities, duties; that they must have work to do and that they must do it faithfully and intelligently; that the tasks which are

given them to perform must be accomplished without such assistance and supervision as will take away from the doer all sense of personal responsibility in the doing. When the task is assigned and directions are given then the doer must be left to work out the result in his own way. Failure in the product does not necessarily carry with it failure in the effort. The best that one often gets from doing is not the thing he has done or produced, but the experience, the strength, the wisdom, the vision he has gained from the work itself.

STATE BOARD OF EXAMINERS.

There was apportioned to the cities, towns and plantations by the State for the year 1896, 516,818 97-100 dollars for the purpose of giving instruction in the public schools maintained by these municipalities. We recognize this as a large sum when we take into consideration the population and valuation of Maine. The State should not shirk the responsibility of seeing that this money is expended in such a way as to do the greatest good. At the present time the State receives the money for the School Fund, apportions it to the different municipalities and with these perfunctory acts its duties and responsibilities seem to cease. This condition of affairs cannot continue without permitting a great wrong to the children.

The time has come when it is clearly the duty of the State, and one from which it should not shrink, to satisfy itself that this money is expended with a wise economy. It should know to whom it is paid, and should have some definite information as to the quality, character and training of those who have charge of the instruction of the youth who, a generation hence, are to be placed in control of all its interests. All thoughtful citizens realize that this money cannot be wisely spent unless it is used to pay for the services of competent, trained instructors. The State can, with a small expenditure of money, ascertain if her teachers possess these two essential requisites. The time has come when a Board of Examiners should be appointed whose duty it shall be to provide for the examination of all persons who desire to teach. In some of the counties it would be necessary to hold but one examination each quarter; in others it would be better to hold examinations in two, three or four different towns. These examinations should be held at such times as will give persons who desire to teach an opportunity to demonstrate their fitness to engage in the work. They should not be, at first, of such a nature as to eliminate from the profession a large number of those who are now teaching, but

should be of such a character as to prevent those who are grossly unfit for the work from remaining in the service, and should be of such increasing thoroughness that those who are but partially prepared for their duties will see the wisdom of more thorough preparation, or the necessity of leaving the profession.

The expenses of this Board could be paid many times from the saving which would come to the State in having an eligible list from which school officials shall select their teachers. The lowest estimate that can be fairly made of the incompetence of the teachers is that one-fifth of them are not qualified to fill the places they occupy. This means that there are over one thousand teachers in the State whose education is so deficient as to render them failures as instructors. Assuming that these schools are in session only twenty weeks and admitting that they cost the towns only \$150 each, for the full year, the aggregate sum paid for "keeping" these schools is \$150,000.* One needs to consider this question but a moment to realize that it is impossible for the State any longer to neglect, with safety, its duty in this matter. The issue is upon us; we must meet it. We must decide whether we will or will not be true to the trust committed to us.

It is not intended to imply that such examinations would eliminate all incompetent teachers from our schools. It is believed they would make it impossible for a large proportion of those persons who are lacking in scholarship to receive authority to teach.

In the first place the most of the teachers who are not qualified to take charge of a school realize their unfitness and would not volunteer to be candidates for certificates. Some would be dropped because they could not secure certificates. The best would be retained and these would be made better by the study they would be induced to make to prepare themselves for their work.

This law would place in the hands of the State the power to say from what list of persons the teachers shall be selected. If towns desire to make more thorough examination of candidates

*The estimates returned by the local superintendents indicate that the sum thus wasted is \$200,000.

for positions in their schools the law should leave them free to do so. It should leave the matter of employing teachers and the management, discipline and the general administration of the school in the control of the local authorities.

It must be apparent to all that the possession of a certificate from a State Board of Examiners would help to give the people of a community confidence in the scholarship and ability of the teacher placed over their children. This confidence has much to do with making a school successful. Without it but few teachers can succeed; with it a much large number would do credit to themselves and render acceptable service to others.

This law should not take from the local officials any of their duties or powers, except to limit them in the employment of teachers to a list of persons holding certificates from the State. The care and custody of school property, the employment and dismissal of teachers, and the general management of the schools should be as much in the hands of these officers as they have ever been. The fact that a person holds a State certificate would not indicate that he is entitled to a school in any community.

In granting certificates, candidates should be given credit for skill in instructing, tact in disciplining, ability in interesting pupils in their studies, and capacity for work. To secure the lowest grade of certificate candidates should have a fair knowledge of the principles and facts of the common English studies. To secure the higher grades of certificates they should have a more complete knowledge of these subjects, and of such other studies as they desire to teach. What the candidate is, what he has done, what he is capable of doing are the items upon which he should be judged in determining whether or not he should receive a certificate, and the grade to which he is entitled.

The law should be so administered as to exclude from the schools persons who have not such knowledge of the common school branches, and skill in teaching, as will enable them to be of service to the children.

The purposes of the law should be to protect the schools against grossly incompetent teachers, to secure an economical expenditure of school funds, and to stimulate teachers to fit themselves more thoroughly for the duties of their profession.

SUPERINTENDENCE OF RURAL SCHOOLS.

The most progressive law enacted by the legislature of 1897 was the one providing for the grouping of towns for the purpose of securing better superintendence of the schools.

It is hoped that the people will make a careful study of the statute and then take the necessary steps to avail themselves of the advantages granted to the towns which accept the State's tender of assistance.

This statute provides that on and after July 1, 1897 the school committees of two or more towns having under their care an aggregate of not less than twenty-five or more than fifty schools, may unite in the employment of a superintendent of schools, provided they have been so authorized by a vote of their towns at the regular town meetings or at special town meetings called for that purpose.

The school committees of the towns comprising the union form a joint committee, and shall be the agents of the towns comprising the union. The joint committee shall meet annually on a day and at a place agreed upon by the chairmen of the committees of the several towns comprising the union, and shall organize by the choice of a chairman and secretary. They shall choose by ballot a superintendent of schools, in which choice the committee of each town shall have a vote proportional to the town's share of the expenditure for the superintendent's salary. They shall determine the amount of service to be performed by the superintendent in each town, fix his salary and apportion the amount thereof to be paid by the several towns, which amount shall be certified to the treasurers of said towns respectively. The amount to be paid by each town shall be determined by dividing the entire sum expended for superintendence among the towns comprising the union in the proportion of the service performed in each town.

Whenever the chairman and secretary of the joint committee shall certify under oath to the State Superintendent of Public

Schools that a union has been effected, that the towns unitedly have raised by taxation a sum not less than five hundred dollars for the support of a superintendent of schools, that a superintendent of schools has been employed for one year, and that the full amount appropriated for superintendence has been expended for that purpose, then the Governor and Council shall draw a warrant on the treasurer of the State for the payment to the treasurers of the several towns of a sum equal to one-half the amount expended for superintendence by each of the several towns, provided that not more than two hundred and fifty dollars shall be paid to any one town or more than seven hundred and fifty dollars to all the towns comprising any union.

Persons employed to serve as superintendents of schools under this act shall hold State certificates under the act of 1895 providing for the State examination of teachers, and shall devote their entire time to superintendence. The powers and duties of superintendents elected under this act shall be the same as those prescribed for town superintendents.

No town shall receive State aid under this act unless its appropriation and expenditure for superintendence has been exclusive of the amount required by law for public school purposes.

The above is the most important single statute relating to the maintenance of public schools that has been passed by any Maine legislature in the last fifty years. It is hoped that the people will make a careful study of its provisions, and will avail themselves of the assistance offered by the State. The following extract from the last report of this department will show the necessity of expert superintendence, and will also explain its benefits, and methods of operation.

"A casual study of the special returns made by the local superintendents and tabulated in the first section of the report of this department for 1896 makes it entirely clear that the time has come when it is necessary to provide for expert superintendence of the public schools of Maine.

"The returns show that 96 per cent. of these superintendents are engaged in some other occupation, and only give to this work such time as they can spare from their regular business. The work done by such persons must necessarily be, to a great

extent, haphazard in character, unsatisfactory in results and wanting in those elements which insure good service. To superintend schools intelligently one needs scholarship, professional training and experience in the work of the school-room. He must know the subject studied, the methods used in giving instruction, and be familiar with the history, science and art of education. He must not only be familiar with the facts taught in text-books, but he must also be a student of science, art, literature, history, economy. He must know what the world has done, what it is doing, what it is capable of doing. He must know men, things, means. He must be strong of mind, rugged of body, rich in personality. His work must be his absorbing vocation. To it he must give his entire time and devote his best thought. He must study schools; he must study teachers; he must study children. One cannot do and be all these things unless he has an aptitude for the work, has prepared for it, and gives his whole time to it. If one's best thought is devoted to his patients, his parishioners, his business, or his farming, it is not possible for him to serve the schools in such a way as to help the teachers to give the best instruction, and the children to do the best work.

"The amount expended annually for the superintendence of schools in the State of Maine is about \$60,000. This is a sum large enough to give to each town about \$120 for this purpose. The State offers to supplement this amount with an equal amount if a number of towns join in employing a superintendent of schools. The State's contribution added to the amount raised by the towns would give a sum large enough to enable them to secure a competent person to perform these duties.

"Perhaps the plan of procedure can be made clearer by using the following illustration. Suppose the towns of Turner, Livermore, Leeds and Greene unite and employ a superintendent. Suppose Turner raises by taxation \$225, Livermore \$145, Leeds \$90 and Greene \$90, making a total of \$550. If an equal sum were furnished by the State, the amount would be \$1,100. On this basis Turner would be entitled to five votes, Livermore to three, Leeds to two, and Greene to two in the selection of a superintendent. If the schools were consolidated even to a reasonable extent in these towns the whole number would not

- exceed twenty-five, and in no case would they exceed thirty. The amounts apportioned to each of the towns named above is not materially in excess of the sums now expended for this purpose. When the towns unite and place the schools in charge of one person who would devote his entire time to the work, then the schools will be under the care of an official who would have a personal interest and professional pride in making them the best which the means placed at his disposal would allow."

SOME THOUGHTS BY THE WAY.

The best teachers are trained in the kindergarten of observation, the high school of study, the college of investigation, and the university of experience.

Some teachers are visionary; not a few have visions; and an increasing number are coming into the list of those who have vision.

We read of an age when it was the work of the scholar to study books. We are enduring the horrors incident to a furor about the study of things. A few have faith to believe that we are approaching the era when we shall exalt the study of life to its deserved commanding place.

Experience and a larger wisdom have reversed ninety-five per cent. of the decisions of reason, and confirmed an equal proportion of the prophecies of the poets. Pope, Emerson, Balfour and Kidd unite in exposing the comparative valuelessness of reason as a guide in certain vital relations, and demonstrate the superiority of intuition in discovering ourselves, revealing others, and making the most of the best in both.

It is profoundly to be regretted that most of the effort in the school of to-day is wasted in appealing to the senses, or the training of this quintette of modern deities. How to develop and utilize these local reporters is the burning question with most teachers. The invisible is not seen; its existence is often denied, and its champion is scoffed off the arena set apart for the self appointed leaders of those who ask to be led.

Any one familiar with the typical school of to-day realizes in how few instances the fact is recognized that the subtle life that quivers on the canvas, breathes from the printed page, and pulsates in bird and flower and gem, is worth more than the beautiful colors, the glowing words and the gracious comeliness that embody it.

Is it talking in an unknown tongue to say that we must learn to communicate without using symbols, that we must hear when

no sound vibrates the air? May we not help our companions to feel the truth of this fine saying of the prince of interpreters of nature? "The sympathy of nature is so responsive that the sun's brightness would fade, the winds would sigh humanely, the clouds drop tears, and the woods shed their leaves in mid-summer and put on mourning, if any man should have a just cause for grief."

Let us forever abandon the idea that analyses, dissections, classifications and memorizing of facts will reveal to the children the story, the lesson, or the life of nature. They must be helped to feel its pulse, hear its music, come in touch with its forms, be warmed by its breath, and respond to its call.

These are the things which kindle the fire that warms the heart and brain. To see a thing in its expression, relation, harmony and proportion is to see it to some purpose. That high priest of the sanctuary of beauty has well warned us "not to lose an opportunity to see anything beautiful, for beauty is God's handwriting,—a wayside sacrament. Therefore welcome it in every fair face, every blue sky, every tinted flower, and thank Him for it who is the fountain of loveliness, and drink it in simply and earnestly. It is a charmed draught, a cup of blessing."

Facts we shall always have with us; it is a part of our duty to know and master them. But facts are means, not ends. One should know them so well that he is unconscious of his knowledge and their existence. It is what they suggest, make possible, inspire, that has value. We should not be beasts of burden, seeking to accumulate, and willing to bear the weight of infinite details that can be better housed in books than in heads.

If we can grow to feel that it is the spirit with which we work, the purpose that inspires us and the motive that holds us to our task, that limit not only the extent, but the value of our service, we have made possible a great blessing to ourselves and others. Then will we feel a just sympathy with all worthy effort, a true harmony with all life, a full recognition of all beauty, and a prompt hospitality for all revelation.

Observation makes it clear that we often hold things so close to our noses that we cannot see them. It is also true that sometimes we try to see so much that we fail to see anything.

Schoolroom instruction, as well as conceptions of life, should have perspective. We should realize that it is not a part of our work to gorge the children with facts, or give them such training as will produce sluggers.

The entomologist can narrow his soul by a too close study of a single bug; and so can the linguist by a too long search for a Greek root. One can live, and live worthily, without knowing much about the structure, characteristics, or habitat of a bird. If he can see its grace, hear its melody, feel its charm, and appreciate its abandon, he has gained more than facts contain.

A fine perception of the fragrance, color, delicacy, and unwritten wisdom of the flower is worth more than a scientific knowledge of the seed from which it grew, and the minutest information of the stalk, branch and leaf which hold its life.

We must know the alphabets and formulae of science. We must be able to make tabular statements, classify and analyze. But we may know and do all these things, and still be deaf and blind to the great lessons that life and nature teach.

It should give us pause when we remember that the school and the pupil take their color, tone and atmosphere from the teacher. Hence he must be clean, kind, responsive, hospitable, broad-visioned, receptive, and large enough to be willing for others to be larger than he, strong enough to be gentle, and wise enough to be simple.

Teachers should not indicate by their systems of instruction that they feel that the results of thinking are of greater value than the power that has been gained in reaching conclusions. The cultivating of self control, concentration, endurance, application, appreciation, insight, receptiveness, responsiveness, should be recognized as being on a higher educational plane than a knowledge of insignificant towns, unimportant dates and meaningless definitions.

The teacher must be a scholar in the sense that history will tell him the path his children have come, and why the ages have made them what they are; his knowledge of science must be so familiar that he can count the pulse of nature; his companions in art and literature must be those who have written

the record of the world before it was lived, and have made their prophecies and longings a part of the progress of the race.

The teacher should not aspire to furnish brains for his pupils; he should not be willing or presume to do their thinking. Such things are an injury to both, without being of service to either.

Children, like other human beings, do the best work when they have some verge, scope and choice. If their personality is respected, their judgment recognized, and their aptitudes considered, they are stimulated to do their best. If they know the principles which underlie the facts studied, and are left to work out the details under one who is quick to see, prompt to command, suggestive in suggestions, and can win more by request than he can compel by command, he will help the children to become increasingly skillful, and render their labors correspondingly helpful. But to accomplish all this he must be more interested in growth than concerned about having his little conceits reduplicated.

One cannot retain his courage to work unless he see more years into the future than the records tell him have passed. He must possess his soul, see whence life has come, whither it is going, and be content to add his contribution to aid in giving it breadth, depth and richness. He must see and help others to discern the music that has no vocal expression, the grace that finds no outward form, and the thought that seeks no words to give it utterance.

We stand in the rotunda of a golden age of great achievements. We owe it to the future, as to ourselves, to appreciate our inheritance, and to use the capacities the travail of the world has given us.

The sun is shining upon a better day than any upon which it has set. It is to dawn upon better days than the one upon which it is shining.

**Union of
Towns for
the Purpose
of Employing
Superintendent
of Schools.**

**State of Maine,
Educational
Department,
W. W. STETSON,
Supt. Public Schools,**

1898.

SUPERINTENDENCE.

The legislature at its last session passed a law authorizing towns to unite for the purpose of employing a superintendent of schools who shall devote his entire time to the work of superintendence. This law is explained in detail in the accompanying circular and it is hoped this explanation will be carefully read by all persons who have an interest in the improvement of our public schools.

The distinguishing feature of successful industrial enterprises of the present time is that the work is carried on under the direction of trained superintendents. Business men have learned that it is for their financial interest to have their workmen perform their labors under the direction of experts. It has been demonstrated that the money devoted to this service makes the entire investment remunerative. What has thus been found true of industrial and business enterprises is equally, if not in larger measure, true of school systems.

The law referred to above provides that one-half the amount expended for superintendents' salaries shall be paid by the State. It also provides that the person elected to serve as superintendent shall be a person of such education and training as will fit him to direct the teaching in the schools under his charge. This is especially important because for some years many of the teachers in the public schools must be persons who have had but little experience as instructors, and who are deficient in professional training. These two facts account for the large number of failures which the local superintendents report from year to year. Many of the persons who serve as teachers have not attended a secondary school more than one or two terms, and have never attended a training or normal school. They enter upon their labors so poorly equipped that failure for one or more terms is the rule rather than the exception. They experiment at the expense of the State and the local communities, and in a still more serious way with the time and lives of the children.

Some of them continue to be failures, and some learn by experience, and develop into efficient instructors. Much of the waste along these two important lines might be saved if competent superintendents visited the schools taught by these untrained persons, indicated to them definitely wherein they were making mistakes and what changes they should institute in their methods, and suggested to them ways and means, plans and devices by which they could improve their work. Under such supervision they would be able to shorten the experimental stage of their careers, and would soon develop into acceptable teachers, or in an equal length of time demonstrate their unfitness to remain in the schoolroom. In either case a great saving would be made in money, and in that which is worth infinitely more than dollars, i. e., the early years of the children. This question is not one which has any experimental phase about it. It has been worked out in other states and in other departments so fully that it simply resolves itself into the question of whether we have such a desire to make progress as will render us willing to accept the advantages offered by the law.

The following objections have been urged to its adoption: "It will increase the cost of maintaining the schools." "It takes the office of superintendent from some one who resides in the town and gives it to a non-resident, and thus takes a part of the school money from the town raising the same." "It will tend to introduce teachers from other communities and thus shut out local talent." "It tends to establish a monopoly and looks towards centralization." "It will result in large salaries for a few persons instead of small salaries for a large number of persons." "Some person who lives in each town better understands the wants of his community, than they could be understood by any non-resident."

The answer to the first criticism on the law is given in so complete a form in the circular referred to above, that it seems unnecessary to repeat it at this point. The second objection is made by a class of people who can be convinced only by that kind of logic which results in depositing money in their own pockets or those of their friends and, therefore, it is useless to discuss the question. The third criticism answers itself. Every person who has an unselfish interest in the schools is interested in their being supplied with the best teachers that can be obtained for the money

which can be invested in the service. The tendency always has been to give local teachers the preference, other things being equal. No change of administration will ever make any change in this particular. The introduction of a trained superintendent will not result in the exclusion of any teacher who is a resident of the town in which she teaches, if she is fairly well fitted for her position. The desire naturally felt by every official to win the approval of the people for whom he labors, will be a sufficient pressure to prevent any injustice in this direction, but will, on the other hand, lead him to give quite as much weight to the claims of local candidates as should be conceded to them. The charge that it tends to monopoly and centralization is always made by persons who have no sufficient argument to present against a movement. The law in no way savors of monopoly except that it reduces the number of officials and calls for a higher grade of preparation for and efficiency in the work. *No powers are given the superintendent under this law which are not given the superintendents of the several towns under the general law. The towns decide by vote whether or not they will unite in the employment of a superintendent. They elect the committees who have in charge the employment of the superintendent, and who may delegate to him as many or as few powers as they see fit. And the law in no way abridges the privileges of the towns that enter upon this arrangement.* The only changes it makes in the administration of the schools, are that it reduces the number of persons who act as superintendents by about four-fifths, and increases the amount paid to the individual superintendent in about the same proportion. THE DUTIES AND POWERS OF THE COMMITTEES AND SUPERINTENDENTS UNDER THIS LAW ARE THE SAME AS UNDER THE GENERAL LAW. The objection urged that big salaries will be paid to a few persons is answered by the fact that it is left with each group of towns to make its own selection of superintendent, and to decide upon the amount he shall be paid, and the State furnishes one-half the sum expended, under certain conditions and limitations which are fully explained in the circular referred to above. It is still farther urged that some person living in a town knows more about the wants and conditions of the schools of the town than can any outsider. This may in some cases be true. But any person who will

make an efficient superintendent for one town, will make a still more useful official for a group of towns, if he can devote his entire time to the work. Any person who is fitted to hold one of these positions can get a better idea of local conditions and needs in a few weeks' study of his schools, and can be in a better position to meet these matters than any one can possibly be who devotes the most of his time to some regular work and occasionally devotes a half-hour to the schools.

A canvass of the situation makes it clear that it would not be necessary to go out of the State for superintendents even if all the towns decided to take advantage of this law at once. There are a large number of persons who are acting as superintendents at the present time who would be exceptionally efficient officials if they had an opportunity to devote their entire time to the work. There are also a considerable number of persons who are acting as principals of high or grammar schools, or who are teaching who would make equally desirable superintendents. From these three sources could be selected thoroughly competent persons to fill all the vacancies that would exist in the State.

CIRCULAR ON UNION OF TOWNS FOR PURPOSES OF SUPERINTENDENCE.

The statute provides that on and after July 1, 1897, the school committees of two or more towns, having under their care an aggregate of not less than twenty-five or more than fifty schools, may unite in the employment of a superintendent of schools, provided they have been so authorized by a vote of their towns at the regular town meetings or at special town meetings called for that purpose.

The school committees of the towns comprising the union shall form a joint committee, and shall be the agents of the towns comprising the union. The joint committee shall meet annually on a day and at a place agreed upon by the chairmen of the committees of the several towns comprising the union, and shall organize by the choice of a chairman and secretary. They shall choose by ballot a superintendent of schools, in which choice the committee of each town shall have a vote proportional to the town's share of the expenditure for the superintendent's salary. They shall determine the amount of service to be performed by the

superintendent in each town, fix his salary and apportion the amount thereof to be paid by the several towns, which amount shall be certified to the treasurers of said towns, respectively. The amount to be paid by each town shall be determined by dividing the entire sum expended for superintendence among the towns comprising the union in the proportion of the service performed in each town.

Whenever the chairman and secretary of the joint committee shall certify under oath to the State Superintendent of Public Schools that a union has been effected, that the towns unitedly have raised by taxation a sum not less than five hundred dollars for the support of a superintendent of schools, that a superintendent of schools has been employed for one year, and that the full amount appropriated for superintendence has been expended for that purpose, then the Governor and Council shall draw a warrant on the treasurer of the State for the payment to the treasurers of the several towns of a sum equal to one-half the amount expended for superintendence by each of the several towns, provided that not more than two hundred and fifty dollars shall be paid to any one town, or more than seven hundred and fifty dollars to all the towns comprising any union.

Persons employed to serve as superintendents of schools under this act shall hold State certificates under the act of 1895 providing for the State examination of teachers, and shall devote their entire time to superintendence. The powers and duties of superintendents elected under this act shall be the same as those prescribed for town superintendents.

No town shall receive State aid under this act, unless its appropriation and expenditure for superintendence have been exclusive of the amount required by law for public school purposes.

The above is the most important single statute, relating to the maintenance of public schools, that has been passed by any Maine legislature for fifty years. It is hoped that the people will make a careful study of its provisions, and will avail themselves of the assistance offered by the State. The following extract from the report of this department for 1896 will show the necessity of expert superintendence, and will also explain its benefits and methods of operation:

"A casual study of the special returns made by the local superintendents and tabulated in the first section of the report of this

department for 1896, makes it entirely clear that the time has come when it is necessary to provide for expert superintendence of the public schools of Maine.

"The returns show that 96 per cent. of these superintendents are engaged in some other occupation, and only give to this work such time as they can spare from their regular business. The work done by such persons must necessarily be, to a great extent, haphazard in character, unsatisfactory in results and wanting in those elements which insure good service. To superintend schools intelligently, one needs scholarship, professional training and experience in the work of the schoolroom. He needs to know the subjects studied, the methods used in giving instruction, and to be familiar with the history, science and art of education. He must not only be familiar with the facts found in school text-books, but he must also be a student of science, art, literature, history, economy. He must know what the world has done, what it is doing, what it is capable of doing. He must know men, things, means. He must be strong of mind, rugged of body, rich in personality. His work must be his absorbing vocation. To it he must give his entire time and devote his best thought. He must study schools; he must study teachers; he must study children. If one's best thought is devoted to his patients, his parishioners, his business, or his farming, it is not possible for him to serve the schools in such a way as to help the teachers to give the best instruction, and the children to do the best work.

"The amount expended annually for the superintendence of schools in the State of Maine is about \$60,000. This is a sum large enough to give to each town about \$120 for this purpose. The State offers to supplement this amount with an equal sum if a number of towns join in employing a superintendent of schools. The contribution made by the State added to the amount raised by the town would give a sum large enough to enable the towns to secure a competent person to perform these duties.

"Perhaps the plan of procedure can be made clearer by using the following illustration. Suppose the towns of Turner, Livermore, Leeds and Greene unite and employ a superintendent. Suppose Turner contributes \$225, Livermore \$145, Leeds \$90 and Greene \$90, making a total of \$550. If an equal sum were furnished by the State, the amount would be \$1,100. On this basis Turner would be entitled to five votes, Livermore to three,

Leeds to two, and Greene to two in the selection of a superintendent. If the schools were consolidated even to a reasonable extent in these towns, the whole number would not exceed twenty-five, and in no case would they exceed thirty. The amounts apportioned to each of the towns named above are not materially in excess of the sums now appropriated for this purpose. This uniting of towns and placing all the schools in the charge of one person who would be expected to devote his entire time to the work would insure the employment of an official who would have a personal interest and professional pride in making the schools the best which the means placed at his disposal would allow."

If any town desires to discuss this subject at its next annual meeting the following article should be inserted in the town warrant:

"To see if the town will vote to authorize the superintending school committee to unite with other towns in employing a superintendent of schools; provided satisfactory arrangements can be made for such a union."

AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL BULLETIN. No. III.

The Country School Problem

A Paper read before the National Council of
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BY

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THE COUNTRY SCHOOL PROBLEM.

It is not my purpose to deny or obscure the real difficulties involved in what is called "The Country School Problem." This is not a question of nomenclature, but a problem of school organization under special conditions.

The problem may thus be stated :

Given a school of twenty to forty pupils from five and six to say sixteen years of age, accommodated in one room and taught by one teacher.

To find the best possible organization and administration that the conditions will permit.

The facts that enter into the problem are (1) that the pupils possess very unequal ability and attainments, and those who at a given time are nearly equal in attainment, make unequal and varying progress ; (2) that the pupils need instruction and training adapted to their ability and needs each successive term, and hence this instruction must have *sequence*, thus permitting progress; and (3) that the health and physical endurance of teacher and pupils limit the daily school session to about six hours. It is also to be kept in mind that the problem involves the providing of the best possible instruction and training not in one branch, not merely in "The Three R's," but in all the essential elementary branches.

I. NON-CLASSIFICATION SOLUTION.

The first solution proposed makes no provision for the classification of the pupils, but each pupil is taught by himself in all branches of study. It is seen that this plan gives as a minimum as many separate teaching exercises as there are pupils in the school, provided each pupil has only one daily lesson. If only "The Three R's" are taught, and each separately, there will be three times as many teaching exercises as there are pupils, and, if the three exercises for each pupil are combined in one, the length of time devoted to each exercise must be increased. But the modern programme of school instruction includes from five to seven

school arts, and, in case of the more advanced pupils, several additional branches of study, as geography, English grammar, history and physiology.

It is unnecessary to take time to show that it is not possible for one teacher to instruct twenty or more pupils, each by himself, in the essential elementary branches. The number of exercises thus required reduces the length of each to so short a time that no efficient instruction is possible; and hence the non-classification solution proposed for the country school may be dismissed as *impracticable*. The plan of individual instruction is only feasible in a school composed of very few pupils.

We sometimes hear of the old-time country school in which there were no classes, each pupil being taught by himself, if taught at all; but I am satisfied that this school exists in the imagination, and not in history. If it ever had an existence it certainly preceded the organization of the common school, if it did not precede any school composed of more than ten pupils. Even ten pupils under one teacher necessitate some classification to permit any efficient instruction or drill.

My father was a pupil in one of the early common schools in New England, and I was a pupil in a still more primitive school in the then backwoods of Ohio, but neither my father nor myself ever saw the wholly unclassified country school of which the present generation of teachers is hearing. In at least two of the three *common* branches—*i. e.*, branches common to all—the pupils in the old-time school were classified. It is true that little attempt at classification was made in teaching the *a-b-c's* or the *a-b-abs*, but necessity forced an early classification in both reading and spelling—imperfect, it is true, but necessary and helpful. I now see in my mind's eye the row of big boys and girls that sat on the back seats and read together in the old English Reader, and I also see the rows of boys and girls, who constituted the successive classes in spelling, standing on the floor and "toeing the mark."

No attempt was made in the first schools which I attended at classification in arithmetic, and later the attempt was first confined to the multiplication table, which few pupils perfectly mastered, and so common drills were feasible. As a rule, each pupil "ciphered" by himself, at his own gait, going to the teacher or some pupil for assistance, when needed. The fact that most of the pupils never reached fractions, and fewer ever acquired much

skill in integer processes, is evidence of the weakness of individual work even in such a study as arithmetic.

A few clever pupils who needed only opportunity for study made good progress without instruction, sometimes remarkable progress, and this was not only true in arithmetic, but also in geography and English grammar when these branches were reached. The lack of classification in these studies was doubtless an advantage to these few exceptional pupils, but no one who actually knows the old-time country school can commend the progress made by nine-tenths of its pupils. It is not too much to claim that its helpfulness to the great majority of its pupils was increased by improved and wider classification. I well remember the first introduction of classification in arithmetic in the rural schools of my native State. I now see the little blackboard that was first nailed to the wall of that primitive schoolhouse, for, though scarcely in my teens, I was installed as teacher of the first class formed in arithmetic.

When I passed from the dignity of a pupil-teacher to the honors of a teacher my best work for the country school was in the introduction of improved classification—not only in reading and spelling, but in all the branches taught. Nearly all of the pupils fell into groups or classes with positive advantage. Those who could work ahead with incidental assistance were permitted and encouraged to do so.

II. THE GRADED SCHOOL SOLUTION.

Another solution proposed is the adoption of a graded course of study with term sections—the annual school session being divided into say two terms—the plan of grading adopted in most cities. In other words, the solution proposed is the grading of country schools with one teacher on the plan of the graded schools in cities.

It is seen that this organization divides an elementary course of study into at least sixteen sections, each including sections of the several branches, and it separates the pupils into sixteen or more corresponding grades, if there be a term interval between the grades.* The fact that the pupils in each grade study

* N. B.—The term "grades" is used in this paper to denote those formal divisions of pupils which correspond to the more permanent divisions in the course of study, which are separated by transitional or promotion lines. The pupils in a given grade may be taught in one or more classes in all the branches, or they may be taught in one class in some branches, and in several classes in other branches; and these classes may be changed from time to time, and without reference to grade divisions or intervals. It is thus seen that the terms gradation and classification are not used as synonymous.

several branches necessitates as many class exercises as there are branches of study. It is thus seen that an average of three class exercises in each grade gives at least forty-eight daily exercises.

It is true that in practice there may be no pupils in several of these term grades, but the reduction in the number of classes thus occasioned will be fully offset by the fact that the pupils in several of the upper grades study more than three branches, and thus require more than three class exercises to each grade. It seems unnecessary to add that such a classification of the one-teacher school is wholly impracticable. I know of no successful attempt to grade the country school with a *term interval* between the grades.

The more common mode of grading the country school is the nominal adoption of the *year* or session interval between the grades. When this plan of grading is strictly adhered to, and there are pupils in all the grades, there are as many separate class exercises as there are year sections in the course of study multiplied by the average number of branches therein. This gives from thirty to forty class exercises—too many for satisfactory class instruction and drill. But in a school of thirty to forty pupils there are necessarily very few pupils in the upper grades, and none in some grades. These breaks are occasioned by the attendance of pupils only a part of the school session, by the failure of pupils to do the work assigned them, and other causes. It thus often happens that country schools may not *at any one time* actually contain more than five or six grades of pupils, even when they are following a graded course of study with eight or nine year sections; but the reduction in the number of class exercises thus occasioned does not make a strict adherence to this city plan of grading feasible. Hence in practice various modifications are made; and some of these are easily made if the school be not dominated by, and sacrificed to, the fetich called the “graded system.” Several of these feasible modifications may be worthy of consideration.

1. Since the several classes are all taught by the same teacher it is feasible to permit pupils to recite in different grades, strict grading being sacrificed to the best possible classification *in each branch*. Thus a pupil may recite in the fifth grade in arithmetic, the fourth in geography, and so on.

This modification of the graded system is practicable only to a limited extent in cities, since the several grades of pupils

occupy, as a rule, separate rooms and are taught by different teachers, and they are thus required to keep a common step in *all* the branches of the course.

2. Since the upper classes in a country school often contain not more than two or three pupils it is feasible for a bright pupil to work ahead of his class while he continues to recite in it. Thus a pupil may be studying decimal fractions or denominate numbers while reciting with advantage in common fractions; for while these daily reviews in common fractions may give him little new knowledge they will increase his skill in fractional processes—and skill in numerical processes is the chief end of elementary training in arithmetic. Indeed skill of some sort is the chief end of more than half of the exercises in the elementary school, and this requires *repeated action*. Experience shows that it is entirely feasible for capable pupils to work ahead of their classes in such studies as arithmetic, geography, history, etc., and that this is often successfully done with very little assistance. It is thus seen that the one-teacher school permits a happy combination of class instruction and individual work—especially in the case of bright pupils.

3. Another modification may be made in certain art studies, as writing, language, drawing, and singing. For the purpose of drill in these branches a country school may readily be divided into three classes, and these, except in music, may be taught simultaneously, as will be more fully shown later. This arrangement not only reduces the number of classes, but it greatly increases the class practice of the pupils. Nor is it found a serious objection that these classes are, at any given time, two or more years apart. These arts have phases that correspond respectively to the three psychical phases through which elementary pupils pass as they advance in the course; and the wise teacher can readily so adapt class instruction and drill to the common needs of the pupils in each phase of progress as to afford to all valuable practice. This is successfully done in many country schools.

The feasibility of these and other modifications have saved the country school in many instances from the procrustean evils that have so often characterized the graded system in cities. A clear apprehension of the difference between the two classes of schools indicates the mistake in assuming that the defects of the graded system in cities necessarily inhere in the system as prac-

tically administered in one-teacher schools in the country. The year interval between grades in cities well-nigh necessitates the "lock-step" advance of the pupils. The classes are too large (or are supposed to be) to permit the teacher to give needed assistance to the strong pupils who may be capable of working ahead in any or all of the studies of a grade, and, at the same time, the interval between the classes is too wide to permit the pupils, with *few* exceptions, "to jump over" to the next higher grade. We have seen many city classes in which the pupils in the upper third of the class were in ability one year in advance of those in the lower third, and yet these pupils were chained together for one year, and then the only mode of relief was the non-promotion of the lower third pupils, thus necessitating their going over again an entire year's work. Thoughtful teachers know what this means. The pregnant fact is that the year interval between the classes in elementary schools in cities is incompatible with a flexible classification of pupils. It is everywhere attended with a serious sacrifice of time and opportunity.

In the one-teacher school the evils of the graded system may be somewhat lessened, but, after all feasible modifications have been made, the system, with even a nominal year interval between the grades, is not the best possible organization of the country school. The modifications permitted relate chiefly to the grading and advancement of the pupils, but the course of study must be followed. *The essential thing in the graded system is the graded course of study.* To abandon the prescribed sequence and coördination of the topics and exercises in the course of study is to give up the system *as such*. But experience shows that it is not practicable to prescribe an "invariable order" of topics and exercises for a one-teacher school. The limitations and conditions of such a school necessitate variations from the prescribed course, and hence the course of study as well as the grading of pupils must be flexible. System and order must often be sacrificed to the needs of the pupils and the limitations of the teacher. The adoption of well adjusted courses of study for country schools has unquestionably resulted in great good, but the blind following of such courses in time and order has often resulted in loss. Much of the difficulty that has attended the graded system in country schools has been thus occasioned. What the one-teacher school imperatively demands is not only a flexible and adjustable classification, but a *flexible course of study*.

This leads to the consideration of a third solution of the problem before us, and this may be called—

III. THE THREE-GRADE SOLUTION.

The three-grade organization of the country school, or, if preferred, the three-department organization, is based on the psychical transitions which appear in an elementary course of training.

The first of these psychical periods includes the kindergarten and the lower primary classes, with pupils from four or five to eight years of age. This is pre-eminently the objective period of training in which primary knowledge is taught objectively, and primary skill in reading, writing, number, language, etc., is acquired by doing largely by imitation. The reader is the only book needed by the pupils.

This is followed by say three years that may be called the transitional or middle period of elementary training. In this period pupils pass increasingly from concrete facts to their simpler generalizations, from processes to rules, and from the known to the related unknown by either imagination or thought; and skill in the several school arts is increased by practice under guidance, increasingly under ideals. The only text books needed are in reading, arithmetic (first book), and later geography (elementary), and these, both in matter and method, should be intelligently adapted to the psychical conditions and needs of young pupils. This is pre-eminently the *fact and skill period* of elementary training.

The next three or four years constitute what may be called the advanced or grammar period. The pupils have now sufficient skill in interpreting written or printed language, and sufficient thought power to study, with proper instruction, a complete arithmetic, a school geography, and later (seventh and eighth school years) English grammar, United States history, physiology, and the elements of natural science.

It is seen that the grading of the elementary school on this psychical basis is about the same as that secured by its division into three departments when the number of pupils is sufficient to employ three teachers—one for the lower or primary classes, another for the secondary or middle classes, and a third for the more advanced pupils.

This is a natural and simple grading for a country school with

one teacher. The distinction in the work of the three grades or divisions is sufficiently marked to permit a definite statement of the knowledge and skill to be acquired in each ; and, at the same time, the pupils in each grade can, from term to term, be reclassified, thus keeping the number of classes as few as possible, and, at the same time, putting each pupil where he can make the most progress.

The number of classes in the two upper grades need not exceed two each in any branch, and not more than three separate classes will be needed in any branch in the primary grade—making not more than six or seven different classes in any branch, with an average of not more than four classes in the principal branches. The grade exercises in writing, language and drawing can be given *in the same period*—a very important consideration, since it secures needed instruction and desired progress.

The course of study can readily be arranged on the same basis. The studies and exercises of each grade may be grouped, thus dividing the course into three well defined sections—primary, middle and advanced—and the attainments required for promotion from one grade to the next higher can be definitely prescribed. It is not necessary to divide the course into year and term sections with a prescribed order of subjects and parts of subjects for each term, as is often done in graded courses for cities. There should be a general order or sequence in the course, but the teacher should be left free to form classes with varying intervals between them, and the progress of each class should not be fixed by a time schedule—as is sometimes done in city schools with many teachers. To reduce the number of classes in a given grade it may be necessary to take up parts of subjects in a different order from that laid down in the course of study, and no two classes may make equal progress.

The essential provision is that the work provided for each grade be completed *as a condition of promotion to the next higher grade*. This will establish a clear distinction between the several grades, and, at the same time, it will allow that flexibility of classification between grade lines which is essential in a one-teacher school.

It is not meant that pupils shall be stopped at the line that separates two grades until they have reached the standard in *all* branches of the lower grade, as is generally required when a school is divided into three departments, each under a separate

The Country School Problem.

teacher and occupying a separate room. In a one-teacher school pupils may and should be permitted to pass a grade line in any branch when they are prepared to do the work of the next higher grade. In practice it will be found that most pupils can with advantage cross the grade line in all branches at the same time but this result should not be forced.

THREE-GRADE PROGRAMME.

A course of study on these three psychical grades of work and attainment makes a three-grade programme of class exercise and seat work both feasible and desirable.

I have elsewhere* presented such a programme with a full statement of its uses and advantages in a one-teacher school. I must suffice to insert the programme here with a brief explanation.

This programme indicates not only the class exercises but also the study or seat work, the class exercises being denoted by boldface type and the study or seat work by common type. The day session of the school is divided into periods of twenty, twenty five and thirty minutes each, the spelling drills in the two upper grades being considered one period; and the teacher's time is divided equitably among the three grades of pupils. The A-grade pupils have eight exercises each day, the B-grade pupils six exercises, and the C-grade pupils five; but, as is seen, the A-grade pupils have two more studies than the B-grade, and the B-grade pupils have one more study than the C-grade. The extra time required to prepare and direct the seat work in grade C will make the time devoted by the teacher to this grade nearly, if not quite equal to that devoted to the B-grade.

A rural school of some thirty pupils will probably have two classes in several branches in the A-grade, two classes, one or more branches, in the B-grade, and possibly three classes in the C-grade making in all some seven different classes of pupils. The time allotted to any branch (as arithmetic) in a given grade must be divided between the several classes (if there be more than one class in the grade), but not equally from day to day, the time devoted to each class depending on the nature of the lessons. One day the upper class in grade A in arithmetic, for example, may have only ten minutes and the lower class fifteen minutes, and the next day this may be reversed. What the programme requires is that th

*White's School Management, pp. 86-94.

The Country School Problem.

THREE-GRADE PROGRAMME.*

| CLOSING TIME | MIN-UTES | PRIMARY (C) | SECONDARY (B) | ADVANCED (A) |
|--------------|----------|---|---|---|
| 9:10 | 10 | OPENING EXERCISES | | |
| 9:35 | 25 | Seat Work † | Arithmetic | Arithmetic |
| 10:00 | 25 | Number <small>On slate or with objects</small> | Arithmetic | Geography |
| 10:25 | 25 | Number | Geography | Geography |
| 10:45 | 20 | Form Work <small>Paper folding, stick laying, etc</small> | Geography | Geography |
| 10:55 | 10 | RECESS | | |
| 11:15 | 20 | Silent Reading | Geography | Grammar |
| 11:35 | 20 | Reading and Spelling | Form Work <small>Map drawing, sand molding, etc</small> | Grammar |
| 12:00 | 25 | Excused from School | Reading | Grammar |
| | | NOON INTERMISSION | | |
| 1:10 | 10 | † | † | † |
| 1:30 | 20 | Form Work <small>(clay modeling, paper cutting, etc)</small> | Reading | Reading |
| 1:50 | 20 | Silent Reading | Seat Work † | Reading |
| 2:10 | 20 | Reading and Spelling | Animal or Plant Study | U. S. History or Physiology |
| 2:40 | 30 | Writing ² or Language ³ | Writing ² or Language ³ | Writing ² or Language ³ |
| 2:50 | 10 | RECESS | | |
| 3:10 | 20 | Number <small>On slate or with objects</small> | Spelling | U. S. History or Physiology |
| 3:35 | 25 | Drawing, ² Singing, ² or Moral Instruction ¹ | Drawing, ² Singing, ² or Moral Instruction ¹ | Drawing, ² Singing, ² or Moral Instruction ¹ |
| 3:50 | 15 | Excused from School | Spelling | Spelling |
| 4:00 | 10 | | Arithmetic | Spelling |

† As may be provided for by the teacher.

NOTES:—The small figures at right indicate the number of lessons a week.

United States history may be taught the first half of the session, and physiology the second half; or each branch may have two lessons a week.

On Friday the last twenty-five minutes may be devoted to instruction in hygiene, temperance, physics, natural history, etc.

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several exercises do not together exceed the time assigned to the grade. Writing, language and drawing in all three grades are to be taught simultaneously in the same period. The inexperienced teacher may not see how this can be successfully done, but the apparent difficulty has been solved in hundreds of schools.

The most hopeful improvement of the country school lies in the adoption of a simpler grading than that of the city school, more flexible classification, with opportunity for individual study and progress, and a workable daily programme. It needs system but not rigidity—an elastic system adapted to its conditions and limitations. The danger is that the rural school may be sacrificed to rigid grading, as has been true in so many cities. What the country school needs is not a procrustean system of grading and promotions, but such an organization as will permit its single-handed teacher and diverse pupils to make the best possible use of time and strength.

It is idle to talk of abandoning all attempts to improve the classification of country schools. Attempts at classification in reading and spelling are as old as the school itself, and classification in other branches has attended, if it has not made possible, most improvements that have been made. The disappointments have usually been due to unwise attempts to introduce into rural schools the rigid graded system as developed in the cities. Such attempts ignore conditions and limitations.

It seems wise to add here that the one-teacher school will not permit a perfect organization. It has necessary limitations; and, after the best possible has been done, it will still have its imperfections. It is, however, my belief that the teacher of a country school, if competent, has some advantage over the teacher of the "highly organized" city school. It is certainly possible to make the one-teacher school a most valuable agency for the elementary education of children.

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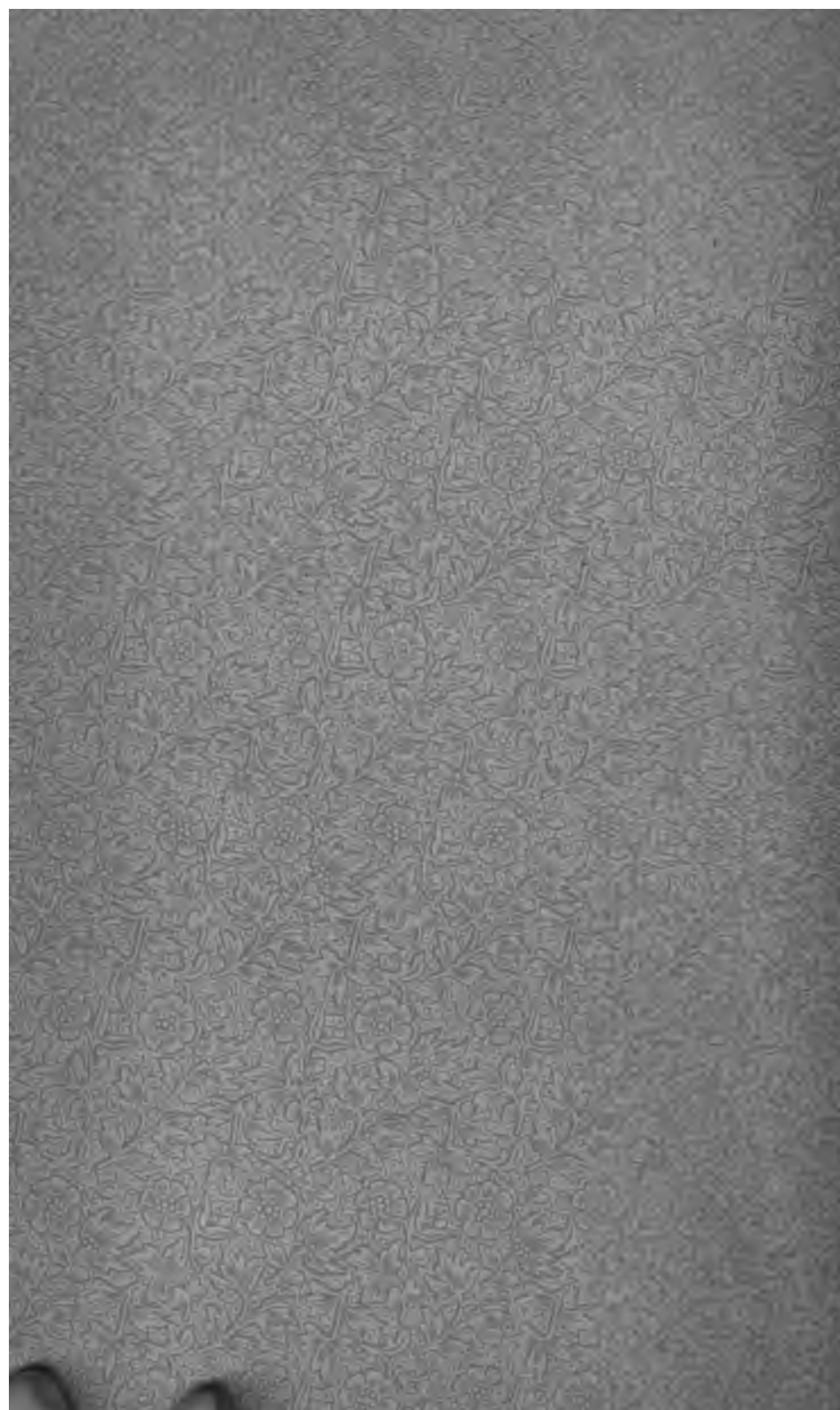
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